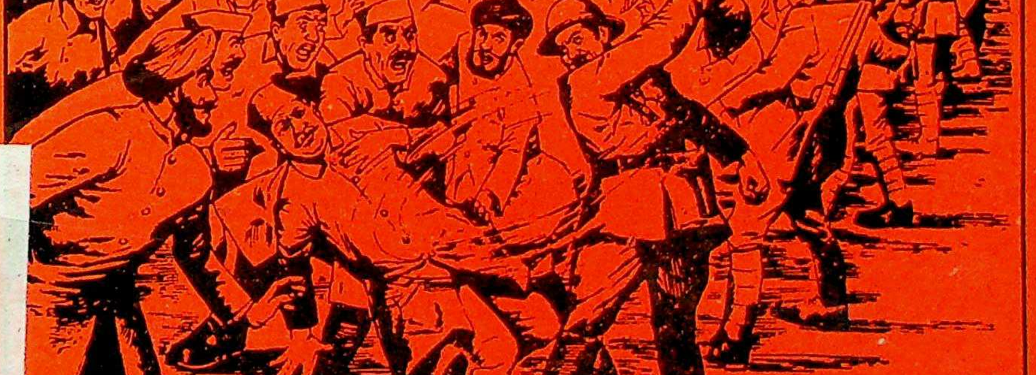
LALA LAJPAT RAI AND INDIAN NATIONALISM

J.S. DHANKI


GO BACK SIMON

By character and temperament Lajpat Rai was a realist, rational and practical man. Through his unique eloquence, untiring personality, strenuous work and intense patriotism he added a formidable chapter in the advancement of freedom struggle. In politics his vision was independent. It is unfair to tag him with the extremist triumvirate Lal-Bal-Pal though he had much in common with the extremists and moderates in terms of political ideology and methods of work. In the fight against imperialism he was keen to offer united resistance hence his role as a "mediator" or 'reconciler' at Surat Congress in 1907. His deportation was not his own seeking and does not support the thesis of his being an extremist much less a revolutionary. After his release he was strictly placed under permanent surveillence and his movements were closely watched by the secret agents. During his forced exile period he adopted various techniques for national work—mighty pen, formation of associations, propaganda organisations and affinity with progressives, etc.

The Punjab politics received an impetus and attained new dimensions since his involvement with the Indian National Congress. His strong leadership during critical times like the Non-cooperation Movement, the Legislative Elections in 1926, the publicity in favour of Nehru Reports, boycott of Simon Commission, etc. unfolded political mentality of the people and his popularity among them.

His views on communal problem are a subject of deep controversy;

(Continued on back flap)

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AND
INDIAN
NATIONALISM

LALA LAJPAT RAI
(1865–1928)

LALA LAJPAT RAI AND INDIAN NATIONALISM

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INTRODUCTION

By character and temperament Lajpat Rai was a realist, rational and a very practical man. He was a man of prompt action and he did not believe in plans, meetings, statements, advertisement and memoranda. He was one of those Indian leaders who gave a new substance and a new emphasis to Indian Nationalism. It is true that the new substance and the new emphasis were already in the air as the various religious revivalist movements had aroused pride among the Indians and an admiration for India's past. But it was Lajpat Rai who put the new tendencies into a coherent theory of Nationalism supported by an appeal to a glorious past, an intense consciousness of existing wrongs and a splendid faith in ultimate victory.

Lajpat Rai, with his characteristic independence, was fast moving into the wider sphere of the "Freedom Movement" of the country. The spearhead of this movement was the Indian National Congress: the Congress was already becoming a force to reckon with. Lajpat Rai's association with the Congress started when he was only twenty three years of age. Since then, till the time when circumstances forced him out of it, he worked under and for the Congress with great zeal and perseverance. By the beginning of the twentieth century he became one of the top ranking leaders of the Congress. The Congress had by that time got divided into two wings, popularly known as the Extremists and the Moderates. He was friendly with both of them and he enjoyed the confidence of both wings. For some time he played the role of a conciliator and peace-maker.

There are divergent interpretations of Lajpat Rai's work and policies as a Congress leader. Most of the historians describe him as an extremist. However, his private letters unfold a different picture. A close study of his letters and activities reveal that Lajpat Rai's position was unique. In politics his "Vision" was independent. He was not an extremist of the school of Tilak, Aurobindo Ghosh and Bipin Chandra Pal and it is unjust to tag him with the extremist triumvirate Lal-Bal-Pal. His association with the Moderate leaders was largely for the sake of unity and out of regard for some Moderates such as Gokhale. On the question of the Prince of Wales' visit to India, Lajpat Rai fully supported Gokhale. The Extremist leaders in the Congress wanted to pass a resolution boycotting the Royal visit. Gokhale was most unhappy. He appealed to Lajpat Rai. On Gokhale's request Lajpat Rai withdrew his opposition. He was the peace-maker between the Extremists and Moderates. When the dispute over the interpretation of boycott was reopened in the annual session of the Indian National Congress in 1906, Lajpat Rai "moved an amendment, which though not accepted by the Extremist leaders was carried by a majority."[1] After his release from Mandalay in November 1907, he did not allow his name to be proposed for presidentship of the Congress at Surat by the Extremists. He expressed his unwillingness to become a source of controversy between the two parties and announced his refusal: "You may believe me that I was sure that it had the unanimous consent not only of the Reception Committee, but of the leaders as well".[2] He also declined to support the proposal of the Extremists to hold a separate Nationalist Congress at Nagpur.[3] He sincerely wanted to "preserve harmony in the national rank".[4] During the Surat Congress, Lajpat Rai honestly strove for a rapproachment between the two opposition factions and made many secret attempts for "reunion".[5] After the split the Extremists announced their withdrawal from the Congress, but Lajpat Rai continued to be a Congress leader. Further, he attended the Allahabad convention of the Moderates where the new creed of the Congress was formulated and he signed it. In 1908 at the request of Tilak, Lajpat Rai "made several attempts to bridge up the gulf that had been created between his party and Moderates by the events at Surat but without success".[6] However, when his peace making attempts failed, he went to England to keep himself aloof from the Congress groupism.[7] He even refused to preside over the Indian National Congress Session in 1914: "I felt that by accepting the presidentship of the Congress I will be putting myself in a wrong hole".[8] Although Lajpat Rai had signed the pledge of loyalty to the Emperor along with other congressmen, but he did not believe in unconditional support to the British in the great War. As an independent leader, he maintained that India should not support England in the War as mercenaries.[9] In September 1920, he supported the broad based scheme of non-cooperation movement, but in his independent address he concluded: "I have my personal opinion on the question involved in programme of non-cooperation".[10] In 1926, Lajpat Rai formed Independent Congress Party, when his ideology did not fit in the Swaraj Party.

Lajpat Rai's deportation in May 1907 was not his own seeking and does not support the thesis of his being an Extremist, much less a revolutionary. Official documents now available reveal the thinking of official mind at different levels. The Lieutenant Governor of Punjab alleged: "Lajpat Rai's avowed object is to tamper with native troops." Two members of the Viceroy's council drew his attention that "Lajpat Rai has attended a few meetings only, his speeches have been much more moderate and he is a member of a society of Moderates whose policy is to proceed by constitutional means. His arrest will cause more commotion".[11] Later Lord Minto, the viceroy, admitted: "I am bound to say the information on which the Punjab Government asked us to take immediate action seemed to me weak, when I became acquainted with it."[12] The deportation was a turning point in his life. It gave the helo of martyrdom and he returned from Mandalay a great national hero. It added an adamanture stone to the mighty structure of Indian Nationalism that had been rearing up with astounding progress for the last twenty five years.

After his release he was strictly placed under permanent surveillance by the Punjab Government.

Accordingly, throughout his life his movements were closely watched by the secret agents of the Criminal Intelligence Department who had a complete record of his description[13] and activities. On August 20, 1908, in a letter from Lahore Lajpat Rai writes: "My life here is a constant misery on account of the close espionage kept on me."[14] When he reached England he reiterated: "I am watched and followed by detectives even in this country."[15] In a secret note submitted on July 22, 1911 by the Hon'ble Mr.J.L.Jenkins, Member of the Viceroy's Council, to Lord Hardinge, Lajpat Rai is described as "by no means the harmless philanthropist." One charge against him was that he kept up "the supply of revolutionary literature to India students." The British thought that Lajpat Rai's efforts for relief of famine in U.P. were inspired not by philanthropy, but by hatred of the British lest the hearts of the people should be drawn to the British officers. The Government considered him "a ring leader of the gang of conspirators and plotters of assassination" established in Europe by his associates of whom Hardyal is mentioned as "the most notorious". "In fact", the note says, "whatever Lajpat Rai may be, there is not the slightest doubt that he has been a dangerous conspirator, responsible for much of the trouble and the crime by which India had been disturbed during the past few years".[16] During the five years exile period in England, America and Japan, the India Office in England had a complete record of Lajpat Rai's activities. On February 1, 1918 the Secretary of State for India informed the Viceroy : "At present, Lajpat Rai appears to be very active and harmful publicist".[17] The Punjab Government issued a handbook to all Superintendents of Police to watch Lajpat Rai's activities on his arrival.[18] Later, on January 29, 1928, in a letter to the Indian Government, Lajpat Rai protested that on his visit at friend's house at Hissar "enquiries were made at his residence by the Police about my coming, intended stay and the object".[19] When pressed hard by the Government of India, the Punjab Government admitted "the surveillance of Lajpat Rai".[20]

1. Lajpat Rai : Autobiographical Writings, V.C.Joshi ed. (Delhi, 1965).

2. Letter, November 3, 1907, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, Gokhale Papers.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Letter, January 8, 1908, Gokhale to Newspaper, Gokhale Papers.

6. Reminiscences of Lok Manya Tilak, Vol. III (Place and date not mentioned), p.154.

7. Home Department, G.O.I. (Poll. B), No. 63-70, November, 1908.

8. Lajpat Rai : "Congress Politics in 1914" vide The People (Lahore).

9. Ibid.

10. Home Department, G.O.I. (Poll), No. 847, 1922.

11. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political-A) Progs. 4-7 of November 1907.

12. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political-A) Progs. 4-7 of November 1908.

13. "Height about 5 feet 5 inches; dark complexion; longish moustache; clean shaven; rather "blear eyed", with a curious habit of blinking, wears semi-European costume; age about 50-55". Vide L.L.Tomkins, Deputy Inspector General of Police, C.I.D., Punjab. Hand Book of the most Revolutionaries, Extremists and Political agitators (further cited C.I.D. Diary), Lahore 2 November, 1918 (Strictly confidential).

14. Letter, August 20, 1908, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, Gokhale Papers.

15. Letter, November 23, 1908, Ibid.

16. Note, July 22,1911, J.L.Jenkins to Hardinge(Confidential). Hardinge Papers. Also see C.I.D. Diary, op. cit.

17. Telegram, February 1, 1918, Secretary of State to Viceroy, Cheimsford Papers.

18. C.I.D. Diary, op. cit.

19. Letter, January 29, 1928, Lajpat Rai to the Hon'ble the Home Member, Govt. of India, vide Home Department, G.O.I. (Pol.), F.No. 105, 1928.

20. Letter, February 22, 1928, the Punjab Government to the Indian Government, vide Ibid.

ABBREVIATIONS

A.I.C.C.	All India Congress Committee
B.N.N.R.	Bengal Native Newspapers Reports
C.I.D.	Central Intelligence Department.
Contd.	Continued.
Deptt.	Department.
G.O.I.	Government of India.
G.S.S.	Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, New Delhi.
I.N.C.	Indian National Congress.
Lt. Governor	Lieutenant-Governor
N.A.I.	National Archives of India, New Delhi.
N.M.L.	Nehru Memorial Library, New Delhi.
P.N.N.R.	Punjab Native Newspapers Reports.
Poll	Political
Prog.	Proceedings.

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Chapter 1

EMERGENCE

Lajpat Rai's entry into the Indian National Congress in December 1888 at Allahabad marked the beginning of his political life. Through his powerful writings, public work, constructive criticism of the governmental policies, frank and eloquent speeches in the annual sessions of the Congress, he emerged as a great national leader. His forceful speeches and conversations impressed Dinshaw Wacha and Gopal Krishna Gokhale, the two Congress secretaries, who named him to the constitutional committee and suggested that he be included as the Punjab member on the deputation to England which was scheduled to leave India in the spring of 1905.[1] He did much useful work in educating the English public opinion about Indian demads. It proved a turning point in his life. Incidentally, Lajpat Rai's association with the Congress marked the significant entry of Punjab in Indian politics. Before this the Punjab's contribution was almost insignificant. Within seventeen years he gave the Punjab an important place in the national political organisation.

The birth of the Indian National Congress in December, 1885 marked an important historical event in the growth of political consciousness in the country. It heralded the beginning of a moderate and constitutional, but at the same time, steady and continuous agitation in favour of certain reforms. It was recognised as the main vehicle of emerging nationalism in India.

Ever since the beginning of nineteenth century, powerful and varied forces were at work for the birth of the Indian National Congress. The most important were English education, the Press, quicker means of transport and communication, a strong and uniform system of administration, internal security and freedom from external danger. To these may be added a growing national consciousness in the country which in itself was fostered by a number of pioneers in the fields of education, journalism and social reform. The credit for giving expression to the nascent nationalism by founding Indian National Congress goes to Allan Octavian Hume, an Englishman and a retired I.C.S. who spent thirty years of his life in the service of the people of India.[2]

A.O.Hume, sensed an approaching danger to the British Empire. The discontent in India was mostly due to the short-sighted and arrogant policy of the rulers. The Indians were deprived of high offices in spite of the existence of the Charter Act of 1833 and the Queen's Proclamation of 1858. The gradual impoverishment of the country, the racial arrogance of the Europeans and the periodical occurance of famines were some of the other evils which widened the gulf between the rulers and the ruled. During this period, the reactionary rule of Lord Lytton (1876-1880) characterised by the Vernacular Press Act of 1878, the Afghan War, the Arms Act, the costly Indian Darbar and the abolition of cotton import duties further alienated the people. Realising such widespread dissatisfaction and the faint rumblings of Nationalism as dangerous, Hume thought of diverting it into peaceful constitutional channels. He, therefore, conceived a scheme of National Union where the leading Indians could be brought together once a year to discuss social problems facing the country. It was due to this reason that Hume travelled to Simla with the safety-valve formula concerning the birth of the Congress. The Governor General Lord Dufferin accepted the advice of Hume and told him:

> There was no body of persons in this country who performed the functions which Her Mejesty's opposition did in England. The newspapers, even if they really represented the views of the people, were not reliable, and as the English were necessarily ignorant of what was thought of them and

> their policy in native circles, it would be very desirable... that Indian politicians should meet yearly and point out to the Government in what respect the administration was defective and how it could be improved.[3]

Hume, with the support of some prominent Indians, succeeded in giving a practical shape to this idea, and the first Indian National Congress met at Bombay on December 28, 1885, in the premises of the Gokuldas Tejpal Sanskrit College, Gowalia Tank Road. It met under the presidentship of a Bengali barrister, W.C. Bonnerjee.

Gradually, the Congress began to fulfil the object for which it was created. Patiently, it criticised the various policies of the Government and suggested the obvious remedies for national ills. It sought the abolition of India Council as a necessary preliminary to all reforms. It demanded simultaneous examination (I.C.S.) in England and India. It stood for the promotion of technical education and the principle of protection to the Indian industry, it pressed for the development of self-government by means of representative councils formed on the basis of elective principles.[4] It sought a better excise policy, reduction of salt tax, extension of permanent settlement and the stoppage of drain. It demanded introduction of jury system, amendment of the Criminal Procedure Code and the separation of judicial and executive functions. It condemned heavy expenditure on Defence and criticised forest laws as well as the Arms Act. It attributed increasing improverishment of the country to the imperial and fiscal policies of the Government and called for the institution of a thorough enquiry through a Royal Commission. Finally, it wanted the British Government to ensure better treatment of Indian nationals in Transvaal, the Free State and the Cape Colony.[5]

In condemning the Government, or in carrying out the task of national regeneration, the Congress adopted peaceful and constitutional methods. It passed resolutions, presented petitions, held meetings and demanded reforms. The advantage of this method was that the

Congress went on without serious opposition from the Government; the disadvantage was that it lacked the necessary strength which alone could make the ruling authority part with some of its powers and privileges.

The early Congress leaders professed unstinted loyalty to the Crown. The spell of the West was fully upon them and such names as Burke, Bright, Macaulay, Carlyle and Gladstone were music to their ears. The magic influence of liberal ideals enshrined in English literature and history produced in them a basic confidence in English sense of justice. Disloyalty, therefore, did not enter their nature; contempt was out of question. Rather, they expressed "unbounded faith in the living and fertilising principles of English culture and English education".[6] British rule was to them "a rescuing hand held out to a drowning man in the darkness of the night".[7] They were happy to feel: "We are British subjects. England has taken us into her bosom and claims us as her own".[8]

For these reasons the Congress always rejected three things, viz., rebellion, aiding or abetting a foreign invasion and resort to crime. They made passionate appeals to the good sense and democratic traditions of the ruling nation. A good example of Congress approach and appeal may be found in Surendranath Banerjee's address to the third Congress in Madras. He said:

> When Italy was struggling for liberty England stretched forward the right hand of sympathy. When Greece was endeavouring to assert her place among the nationalities of the earth, England was then the foster-mother of freedom, responsive to the call. We are neither Italians nor Greeks. We are English subjects (Loud Applause).[9]

Also, the Congress leaders took their stand upon the solemn pledges given by the rulers themselves from time to time. The Queen's Proclamation of 1858 was to them as dear and fresh in memory as the first touch of love. This Proclamation and other similar promises were repeatedly quoted by them in support of the justness of their demands. In the fourth session of the Congress at Allahabad, Lord Ripon's words were quoted:

> Queen Proclamation is not a treaty; it is not a diplomatic instrument; it is a declaration of principles of Government![10]

Finally, the Congress leaders also significantly perceived a close connection between economics and politics. They constantly impressed on rulers the need for the extension of Permanent Settlement, encouragement of technical education, reduction of salt-tax, revival and development of indigenous arts and crafts, as well as the growth of new industries. They strongly deplored the increasing impoverishment of the country due to drain, excessive taxation, over-assessment, wasteful military and other burdens and unjust charges. They repeatedly demanded the appointment of a Royal Commission for the purpose of equitable and rightful apportionment of expenditure between Indian and England.[11]

The attitude of the British Government towards the new movement was definitely friendly in the beginning. High officials attended its deliberations, not only as observers but even as delegates.[12] Lord Dufferin took a sympathetic view of the demands put forward by the National Congress at its first Session, and he described the objects of the more advanced party as "neither very dangerous nor very extravagant".[13] He impressed on the Home Government the need to adopt a new attitude in view of the considerable changes that had taken place in India.[14] The Governor of Bombay, Lord Reay, followed a policy of "benevolent neutrality" towards the Congress.[15]

But after the year 1887, the attitude of the Government changed. Even as early as 1887, a District Officer called upon a gentleman to furnish a security of Rs. 20,000 to keep the peace, simply because he had attended the Madras Congress in defiance of his wishes. Next year, i.e., in 1888, Lord Dufferin expressed himself against the aspirations of the Congress leaders. He felt that the Congressmen " seek to sit in the Chariot of sun by demanding representation and enlargement of councils and legislatures on elective basis."[16] He warned: "the man who stretches forth his hand towards the ark, even with the best intention, may well dread lest his arm should shrivel up to the shoulder".[17] He described the Congress as a "microscopic minority".[18] In the same year (1888), the U.P. Government did not allow Congress to get a suitable site for Allahabad Session. Lord Lansdowne's attitude towards the Congress was one of "good humoured indifference". He was strongly of opinion that the British Government should tolerate the movement for a hostile policy would make it dangerous.[19] In the last decade of the nineteenth century, the Government's attitude took a turn for the worse because of a number of events - the outbreak of famine, the unpopularity of the plague operations, the murder of Rand and Ayerst, the arrest of natu Brothers and the imprisonment of B.G. Tilak, the popular leader of Maharashtra. The Congress had strongly protested against these measures.

In spite of this growing hostility of the Government, the basic strategy of the Congress and deeper loyalty of the majority of its members remained unshaken. Basically, they had pinned their faith not so much on the good sense of every British ministry or its spokesmen as on the traditional and institutional sense of justice of the British people and the Liberal Party.

The programme, aims and demands of the Congress produced a different reaction among the Muslims of India. Under the leadership of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan a large majority of them remained aloof from Congress and its activities though some Muslims continued to attend Congress sessions. The first Congress was attended by two Muslims, the second by 33 and the third Congress had a Muslim President. Sir Syed found his community economically and educationally very backward; he made it a mission of his life to promote western education among the Muslims and to work for their upliftment. This he sought to achieve with the active co-operation of the British, by remaining faithful to them and by shuning all political activities. He opposed the principle of election and representative institutions largely due to the fear of Hindu majority.[20] Sir Syed's opposition to the Congress did not stop here; he went to the extent of forming a rival association.

What made Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to take up this line? On December 25, 1887, he openly attacked the Congress in a speech before a large gathering of prominent Muslims in Lucknow. He made three points - that the Hindus and Muslims were two different nations in spite of many things in common; the representative institutions were unsuited to the Indian conditions as these would lead to the permanent subjugation of the Muslims by the Hindus because of their numerical strength; and that Indian Muslims must depend on the British to safeguard their interests and secure their effective representation in administration. Replying to Badr-uddin-Tyabji's letter Sir Syed Ahmed wrote that there was no such thing as "the general progress of India" or "India as one nation". There could not be a National Congress of equal benefit to all the peoples of India. "Is it supposed", he wrote to Tyabji on January 24, 1888, "that the different castes and creeds living in India belong to one nation or can become one nation, and their aims and aspirations be one and the same? I think it is quite impossible and when it is impossible there can be no such thing as a National Congress".[21] In short, he believed that the Muslim alignment with such an organisation would lead them nowhere.

Lajpat Rai in his book Young India discusses the genesis and objects of Indian National Congress. He asserted that as a child of the joint deliberations of Dufferin and Hume, Congress was a "safety valve" for preserving the empire. The immediate motive which underlay starting of the Congress was to save the empire from the possibility of a violent outbreak.[22] Later, when this child was hardly three years old, its godfather, the Marquis of Dufferin, changed his mind and decided to strangle it. This he, according to Lajpat Rai, sought to achieve by finding in Sir Syed Ahmed his ally, and raising through him the religious and denominational bogey.[23] Sir Syed's opposition to the Congress created a schism in the national movement. The cry which he raised was practically the death knell of Indian Nationalism at that time. Sir Syed also raised the great question mark which was to shadow Indian politics for the next sixty years; what would be the position of the Muslim community in a free India? If British autocracy were to be replaced by an Indian democracy, would it give a permanent advantage to the Hindus, who heavily outnumbered the Muslims? Was it (as Syed Ahmed put it) a game of dice in which one man had four dice and the other only one? Had Muslims anything to gain from the withdrawal of British rule. Sir Syed's attitude towards the Indian National Congress, Lajpat Rai believed, was influenced by following considerations:

(a) "that in India the Hindus were in a majority, and if a form of democratic Government was accepted as the political goal of India, the Muslims were bound to be in a minority.

(b) that the Hindus were both economically more advanced than the Muslims, and would monoplise much of Government influence for a long period to come.

(c) that Hindus Raj might possibly mean the death of Islam in India or at least a position of subservience for it".[24]

At the end of 1888 Lajpat Rai addressed a series of "open letters" to Sir Syed Ahmed, and he ruthlessly exposed the change in his attitude. These letters were published shortly before the fourth session of the Congress at Allahabad in 1888 in the Urdu weekly, Kohi-i-Noor of Lahore. He believed that that the bestowal of knighthood brought a strange change upon him; his political opinions became blindly pro-government. Earlier, Lajpat Rai was a great admirer of Sir Syed Ahmed. But after the emergence of the Congress the Muslim leader changed his previous stand and he became anti-Congress. He asked the Muslim to keep away from the Congress which, he believed, was a seditious and sectarian organisation and a harbinger of civil war. Lajpat Rai took up his powerful pen against him and wielded it with the utmost vehemence. Sir Syed had opposed the Congress demand of representation in the legislative councils. Lajpat Rai described his stand about representation as "a mere mockery, a contradiction in terms".[25] He drew attention of Sir Syed that "the correct solution is this and no other, that the people must be represented by delegates, elected by themselves, and subject of course to the restrictions to be imposed by the Government". "Co-sharers in the business of governing or legislating", he added, "these representatives must be such as to be totally independent of official favour or disfavour". If the selection of members of the legislative council was to be entrusted to officials, he feared that it would be a "downright fares".[26] Defending the emergence of the Indian National Congress, Lajpat Rai reminded Sir Syed that the National Congress wanted nothing but that the voice of the people be listened to, and that the strong and turbulent "may not oppress the feeble and the poor". He described the Congress movement most opportune "for the redress of the grievances of the Indians in India".[27]

These "open letters" are Lajpat Rai's first important political writings. Written at the young age of twenty-three they reveal Lajpat Rai's deep insight into Indian political situation. Realising that without active Muslim participation the Congress movement would be weak and inadequate, Lajpat Rai made a bold attempt to bring Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and his followers to his point of view. The letters are the clearest indication of Lajpat Rai's belief that the political interests of various communities living in India were identical.

Lajpat Rai's association with the elite of Indian National Congress started after its third session which was held at Madras. Ali Muhammad Bhimji, a Congress leader, visited Punjab on behalf of the Congress in the beginning of 1888 in order to deliver lectures. He addressed a meeting at Hissar at the invitation of Lajpat Rai who had been very much impressed by the proceedings of the third Congress and A.O. Hume's pamphlets entitled Old Man's Hope and Star in the East.[28]

Lajpat Rai attended as a Punjab delegate the fourth session of the Indian National Congress held at Allahabad in December 1888. He received a warm welcome from the senior Congress leaders of the Reception Committee including Hume and Madan Mohan Malaviva when he arrived at Allahabad to attend the Congress with the Punjab contingent of 80 delegates. In his speech, he repeated his criticism of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, and he was congratulated on his "open letters". The delegates lustily cheered his performance and Hume, the father of the Congress, was so much impressed that he got the "letters" translated into English and published them in the form of a pamphlet. He was also accorded the honour of supporting the first resolution on the expansion of the Governor-General's Council and of the Provincial Legislative Councils. Lajpat Rai pointed out, "How can the people of a country have their voice constantly heard if not through their representatives?"[29]

The participation in the Allahabad Congress was the starting point of Lajpat Rai's political life. The young leader, from a backward district of the Punjab, who was not yet twenty-four had found a place among the senior leaders of the Indian National Congress. Proceedings of the Congress were conducted in English but for the first time Lajpat spoke in Urdu in the session. The Congress was still an exclusive organisation of the elite, the new-educated and professional classes; prayers, petitions and protests were its instruments for the political reconstruction of India.

Lajpat Rai attended the fifth session of the Congress held in December 1889. He was outstanding in the Punjab contingent. Sir William Wedderburn, a former civilian like Hume, was the President of the session which was marked by the presence of Charles Bradlaugh, an eminent champion of the Indian cause in the British Parliament.[30] Lajpat Rai supported the resolution for increased representation of Indians on the legislatures. The key note of the discussion on the subject was the claim voiced by a Muslim delegate for equal representation of his community in the Councils. Lajpat Rai argued that no distinction should be made among the members of the different communities in regard to political privileges. As for himself he emphatically stated:

> I am a Hindu; in the Punjab the Hindus are in a minority and so far as I am concerned, I should be quite content to be represented by any good

Mahommedan or Sikh member".[31]

He however, supported the clause of the reform scheme embodied in the resolution providing for representation of minorities by men of their own communities to remove their fears and guard their interests.[32] Lajpat Rai invited the next annual meeting of the Congress in the Punjab.[33]

After the Bombay Congress, Lajpat Rai's interest in the Congress did not remain as strong as earlier. His attitude towards the Congress for the next fourteen years was that of indifference. Except for attending the annual meetings at Lahore in 1893 and 1900, Lajpat Rai did not take much active part in the Congress. In fact, he did not find any useful purpose being served because the cause nearest to his heart, of full blooded Nationalism, was not much in evidence in the Congress. He felt, but vaguely, that the "Congress leaders care more for fame and pomp than for the interests of the country".[34]

Lajpat Rai's indifference towards the Congress after 1889 was on account of the influence of his Arya Samajist friends, particularly Rai Mul Raj, a staunch opponent of the Congress. Since the Congress was the brain child of Hume, an Englishman, it could not possibly be, in his opinion, the vehicle for Nationalist aspirations. To Lajpat Rai, Hume's idea of "the safety value" function of the Congress was a deliberate device aimed at setting up a harmless organisation for paralysing development of a broad-based and more militant movement. He did not subscribe to Hume's hope and expectation of the Congress as an instrument which would trnasform the character of Government of India, peacefully and gradually, from a foreign bureaucracy into a stable national self-governing Dominion. Lajpat Rai believed that Hume by securing the support and cooperation of a great majority of the middle classes and carefully inoculating them with a mild and harmless form of the political fever had taken certain precautionary measures against the otherwise inevitable ravages of a violent and epidemic outburst of disorder. He wanted to avert the possibility of violent revolution. Hume had further envisaged that the Congress was designed to limit and control forces which Western education and ideas had let loose before they would burst into a revolution.[35] In the deliberations of the Subject Committee of the third and fourth sessions of the Congress, Hume had strongly opposed the proposals to pass the resolution which asked the Government to abolish the Arms Act and enables Indians to own arms. Hume had aserted that his memory of the Mutiny would never allow him to support such a resolution.[36]

Like his Arya Samajist friends - Sain Das and Hans Raj - Lajpat Rai believed that participation in political movements would make the bureaucracy suspicious about the Hindus, and the British Government would obstruct their progress and harm them in many ways.[37] The Samaj, in its early days with its nationalistic outlook and principles of self-reliance and self-help, was looked upon with suspicion by the British authorities. Since it had several government servants among its members, many of its leaders, therefore, were in favour of keeping themselves aloof from the Congress which was a political body. Moreover, their Nationalism was basically Hindu solidarity since they found the Hindus suffering from internal dissensions.[38]

Despite his indifference to the Congress, Lajpat Rai did not altogether eschew politics. Occasionally, he participated in the activities of the Lahore Indian Association and attended several meetings held under its auspices.

Lajpat Rai renewed his contact with the Indian National Congress when it met for the first time at Lahore in December 1893 and was presided over by Dadabhai Naoroji. He was elected member of the Reception Committee. He spoke on education and stirred the audience with his usual force and vigour. Lajpat Rai criticised the government for reducing grant to some of the educational institutions. He stated:

> "In discouraging higher education and in reducing the expenditure upon it, the Government is laying itself open to a charge of forgetting its noble mission and work in India, and of forgetting the high ideal chalked out for it by the founders of the Empire. While other civilised countries,

> like Europe and America, are spending large sums of money on education it is a matter of regret that the Government of India is reducing that expenditure".[39]

> As regards technical education, Lajpat Rai said:
> I beg to submit that it (Technical education) is of still greater importance. While civilised countries, like Europe and America, are devising national systems of technical education in order to fit their citizens to compete with other civilised countries in the arts and industries, India, with its growing poverty and starving population and its embarrassed exchequer, is sleeping. No care has been taken of the industries of the country... Therefore, it is essential for the material progress of the country, that Government should look into and provide technical instructions in Schools and Colleges and enable us to earn our livelihood independently....[40]

Criticising the educational policy of the Government, he described it as "simply to produce clerks or to produce some law teachers who do not serve any useful purpose".[41] In this Congress session Lajpat Rai strongly supported the resolution demanding more expenditure on technical education. This, he thought, would increase the wealth of the country. He wanted a voice of common people in the Legislative Council and protection of their life and property.[42] He was also in favour of separation of powers.[43] His speeches were greatly appreciated by the Congress-men. By his ability, eloquent speeches and persuasive skill Lajpat Rai greatly impressed Congress leaders. Here, he also met Bal Gangadhar Tilak for the first time, and in subsequent years this acquaintance ripened into a very intimate friendship and political collaboration; both were to work for the realisation of Swaraj.

Between 1893 and 1900, Lajpat Rai did not again attend any session of the Congress. But, during this period, Lajpat Rai writes: "my interest in politics did not die out".[44] He took part in the activities of Indian Association and local politics of Lahore. His chief field of activity during this period was writing on the lives of patriots. He published in 1897 his translation of the life of Mazzini whom he adopted as his Guru, and also biographies of Garibaldi and Shivaji. In the preface to his life of Mazzini, he emphasised that political liberation demanded the highest sacrifice. He urged that unless the leaders of the Congress proved themselves unselfish and worthy of being followed by the masses it was useless to agitate for political reforms.[45] In 1897, he led a campaign in Lahore for raising funds for defending Lokmanya Tilak against charges of sedition. During this period Lajpat Rai also organised relief operations for famine. He was deeply moved by the reports that a large number of orphans and waifs were passing into the hands of Christian missionaries. He started in February 1897 the Hindu Orphans Relief Movement for the relief of orphans of the Central Provinces. The emissaries of Lajpat Rai succeeded in rescuing more than 250 destitute children from Jabalpur, Bilaspur and other districts. They were brought to the Punjab and lodged in the Arya Samaj orphanage at Ferozepur, Lahore and Amritsar. In 1899-1900 the Punjab and large part of the Northern India were again affected by severe famine. Lajpat Rai again organised relief operations. In an appeal to the public, he said, that "a nation which could not protect its own orphans and waifs could not claim respect at the hands of other people".[46] His widespread relief work resulted in rescuing more than 2000 orphans who were brought into well organised orphanages which provided food, clothing and educational training.[47] His relief work greatly impressed the Famine Commission which invited him to place his views on the subject before the Commission. Later, the Commission accepted his views and recommended in their report that deserted children and orphans should be made over to other persons or institutions if their own failed to take charge of them.[48]

After an absence of six years, Lajpat Rai attended the sixteenth annual session of the Indian National Congress at Lahore in 1900. In his speech, in Urdu, he reminded the Congress elite to work for the improvement of the economic condition of the masses. He believed that 'the prosperity of a country depends upon its industries'.[49] He moved a resolution (No.XII) which stipulated that at least half a day of each annual session of the Congress should be devoted exclusively to a discussion on industrial and educational problems of the country.[50] He also moved a resolution for the formation of two separate committees to consider and suggest possible means on educational and industrial growth of the country. The Congress accepted this resolution. The resolution of technical education (No. VIII) also received Lajpat Rai's full support; it urged the Government to open more technical schools and institutions and to promote small scale indigenous industries. This resolution, incidently, may be called Congress' first commitment to the idea of Swadeshism - an issue which was to rock the Congress after a few years. In the wake of the resolution two committees, industrial and educational, were appointed "to consider the improvement of Indian industries and promote industrial education".[51] The members of the Industrial Committee were Lajpat Rai, Tilak, Gokhale and Surendra Nath Banerjee.

The approval of the resolution calling for a half day debate of industrial and educational subjects and the appointment of the Committees marks a definite progress in Congress aims and programme.[52] It clearly implied that the rhetorical speeches of the three day annual Congress should be replaced by serious political discussion of matters concerning directly with the hardships of the masses.[53] Lajpat Rai's role in moving and piloting these resolutions is significant; this clearly shows his strong attachment to the educational and economic upliftment of the country. A significant result of Lajpat Rai's contribution to the 1900 Congress was that the Subject Committee gave Punjab a larger number of seats on the Indian National Committee.[54] The number of Punjab members was raised from four to six delegates, while the members from Bombay, Madras and Bengal were reduced from eight to seven delegates.[55]

The Lahore session (December 1900) was important for another reason also. It provided Lajpat Rai with opportunities to befriend Tilak and exchange views with him.[56]

At the turn of the century, Lajpat Rai was ready for active participation in politics. The programme of the Indian National Congress, however, was still not in line with his ideas about political work. He found it still involved in theoretical discussions and unwilling to adopt bold and constructive policies. In view of the approaching Calcutta session, Lajpat Rai published two articles in which he expressed his views on the Congress, and suggested some measures for the forthcoming Calcutta Session (1901). In the first article entitled, "The Economic and Industrial Campaign in India", he blamed the British Government and the leaders of the Congress for the poverty of India. He argued that although India had great economic and industrial resources, the British Government purposely discouraged technological education in order to maintain India as an open market for British industrial goods. He also blamed the leaders of the Congress for persisting in fruitless political agitation instead of promoting Indian technological education. He emphasised that so long as India was poor it could not achieve nor maintain political freedom and urged that each province should send one student every year to Europe and America to gain technological knowledge. He reminded the Congressmen that self-reliance and self-help were the essential pre-requisites to economic and political advancement of the Indians. Lajpat Rai exhorted the Congressmen to devote themselves to economic and industrial reconstruction of the country.[57]

In his second article entitled, "The Coming Indian National Congress - Some Suggestions",[58] Lajpat Rai criticised the character, methods and aims of the Congress. He ridiculed the Congress as an annual festival of English educated Indians who assembled in order to amuse themselves and to increase their fame by "uttering plausibly worded platitudes and well-disguised commonplaces in the shape of speeches". He mocked at the dress of the well-to-do delegates and condemned the lavish decorations and furnishings of the Congress pavitions as an unjustified extravagance. He argued that this gave cause to Englishmen in India and in England to point to the prosperity of Indians under British rule and to negate the deliberations of the Congress on the poverty of India. In anguish Lajpat Rai asked, "is it not possible to achieve better and more tangible results from this annual gathering of the best and most intelligent of the educated Indians?" Elaborating its principal defects, Lajpat Rai accused the Congressmen of having created the false impression that it could gain political reforms by merely passing resolutions and delivering speeches, of misleading Indians to place unjustified faith in the efficacy of constitutional agitation, and failing to impress upon the people the need for greater sacrifices for the achievement of political freedom. He criticised the Congress for its failure to afford the opportunity of comparing notes and exchanging views, by which the unity of the nation or at least of its principal component parts, might be really furthered and definite progress in that direction might lead to more extended exertions towards the same end. He also condemned the Congress for its "failure to take some practical steps to check the growing poverty of the country and to dispel ignorance"[59] among the masses. He reminded the Congressmen that "we have not realised the full significance of the word 'patriotism'. We have been taking it easy and never realised in our heart of hearts that patriotism is a cult requiring the most rigid and ascetic course of life from its devotees". "It is only one degree lower", he added, "than the absolute self denial of a Sanyasi".[60]

In this editorial note Lajpat Rai also suggested remedies for the efficient functioning of Congress organisation:

> Under clause 1:- I will suggest that the sitting of the general assembly be shortened, as much as may be possible to do, at once. In no case should it exceed two days with a maximum sitting of five hours every day at the most. In the general assembly no speaker, whether the proposer or the seconder or the supporter should be allowed to exceed the limits of 10 or 5 minutes respectively except the Chairman of the Reception Committee, the President, or the proposer of a resolution or amendment falling under clause (e)...
>
> Under clause 2:- I will suggest (a) total dis-

> continuance of all such practices as are, if at all, adopted, encouraged or connived at to 'bring in' such people to the Congress as are otherwise either not eligible for its membership, or do not possess sufficient interest therein, or are of no use to it except in increasing the number of delegates from a particular class. It should be the business and duty of every Congressman to jealously guard the honour, the dignity and the prestige of the Congress, and nothing should be allowed or encouraged which has even the least semblance of being dishonorable, undiginified, or likely to lower its reputation, or lessen its sense of all self-respect....
>
> Under clause 3:- I will suggest that only responsible and really working men should be selected as members of the Indian Congress Committee. The Provincial Committees, moreover, ought to see that only such men are placed on this committee who take a real interest in the political reform movement and who are prepared to undergo, some amount of sacrifice, in the cause of the country's political progress. Members who fail to attend even one meeting in the course of the year ought to be disqualified for re-election.
>
> Under clause 5:- I will suggest, that the least that should be undertaken at once, is the employment of a paid officer whose business should be to go round and collect information on both these heads. In my opinion we ought to be prepared to give a more substantial proof of our earnestness by voting a certain amount of money to be spent in this coming year, by ourselves on the object in question[61].

Lajpat Rai gave very valuable and significant suggestions to make the Congress more efficient and effective. He wanted to enlist keen, dedicated and selfless members in the Indian National Congress. Without caring for the numbers, he wanted to enroll only such members who were actually interested in political reform movement, and who could efficiently implement the programme of the Congress. It is thus clear that

Lajpat Rai wanted Congress organisation composed of really dedicated and patriotic persons; he attempted to modify the character of the Congress. From a loose, casual and unwieldy organisation, he wished to convert it into an effective, dynamic, strong movement. Later on, some of his suggestions were accepted by the Moderate Congress in 1903.

When the Calcutta session convened in December 1901, Lajpat Rai did not attend the Congress. It was composed predominantly of delegates from Bengal.[62] Its agenda and proceedings were entirely controlled by W.C.Bonnerjee and Pherozeshah Mehta through the President Dinshaw Wacha.[63] The resolution moved by Lajpat Rai and passed in the 1900 session at Lahore to devote half a day to industrial subjects was not implemented.[64] The Congress decided that a committee be formed to discuss whether a resolution on industries should be presented at the next Congress.[65] Lajpat Rai was against this resolution. He wrote articles attacking Congress leaders, while The Tribune published numerous articles and letters criticising Congress 'inaction'.[66] At the 1901 session the Punjab delegates threatened to leave Calcutta over the issue of the constitution and they were finally quieted only by the assurances of the Secretary, Wacha, that the Indian Congress Committee would meet the following year and form a Committee for the purpose of framing a constitution and also for electing the next President. When Wacha refused to call a meeting of the Committee and personally appointed Surendranath Banerjee as the 1902 president, Punjab delegates charged that the Congress was a "play thing of a clique", and seceded from the national organisation.[67] Punjab did not attend the 1902 Ahmedabad Congress, and only a handful of older politicians from Ambala attended the 1903 Madras session.

Lajpat Rai's reaction to the Calcutta Congress (1901) was expressed in two articles in which he urged the Congress for the abandonment of constitutional agitation. In the first article entitled, "The Principles of political Progress", he wrote, "the first axiom which every Indian politician ought to take to heart is that no nation is worthy of any political status if it cannot distinguish between begging rights and claiming them". He condemned the Congress as an institution of beggars who pleaded for charity from the Government instead of realising that "sovereignty rests with the people".[68]

In Indian politics, Lajpat Rai and Gokhale were two outstanding leaders during this period. They represented two different provinces in the Indian National Congress. They were excellent speakers who held each other in high esteem. They worked together as representatives of the Congress in England in 1905. Personal attachment and devotion to national interest never allowed them to drift apart and in practical life they were very near to each other. In their intimate contact with one another, Lajpat Rai and Gokhale used to have a repeated and prolonged discussions on all vital matters. They influenced each other through their activities. The letters and correspondence which they frequently exchanged also revealed not only the temperamental and fundamental differences but also the many things which they had in common. Despite intimate relations they had some ideological differences. Gokhale wanted to mould India in the image of the West. He emphasised that India could take her place in the comity of nations only by imbibing the political thought of the West and adopting its representative institutions and methods of economic development.[69] He considered the British as the fortuitous dispensation of divine providence sent to rouse India from the lethargy of centuries and to teach her how to remodel her institutions in the image of the then most highly advanced nation of the world. He believed in sending resolutions and appeals to the rulers. His politics were shared by Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta, Womesh Chandra Bonnerjee and D.E. Wacha. But Lajpat Rai was pround of Indian history, its communities and peculiarities. Although he did not want to shun the West, but he emphasised the need to maintain and strengthen the indigenous base.[70] He, therefore, underlined the need of political education to make the people conscious of their rights.[71] Lajpat Rai wanted that the Congress should change its old methods; he roundly denounced the slow and halting approach of the Moderates. As a practical man, he emphasised that the Congress should have a band of earnest missionaries to work out the political regeneration of the country.[72]

In 1904, Punjab was becoming a virile centre of political activities. There were various reasons. The Land Alienation Act of 1900 aimed to prevent the trasfer of land from the agriculturists to non-agriculturists, created discontent among the non-agriculturists or urban classes. No doubt, it could be defended as a beneficial measure aiming at the prevention of exploitation of the poor by the rich but those classes adversely affected by the legislation carried on a persistent agitation against the Act. It had the effect of politicising to an extent hitherto unknown large numbers of the people of the province. There was widespread involvement at all levels in all areas of politics, from local self governing bodies to social, public and political associations of various kinds. The second cause was increase in revenue, inadequate steps of the Government to deal with famine and plague in the province. The Punjab mewspapers had become mouthpiece of the people to express their grivances. Lajpat Rai and his Arys Samajist friends were keen to revive political activity in the Punjab and renew contacts with the Congress. A newspaper in English was considered essential as the organ of their party and therefore, The Panjabee was launched in October 1904. The political situation within the Congress had also changed for Tilak and the Extremists were making a determined attempt to wrest a new constitution and a "practical" programme from the Congress leaders.[73] Lajpat Rai proposed at a December meeting of the Indian Association that Punjab should demand a constitution and an effective programme for the Congress. The motion was carried on by a majority. In his forceful speech, Lajpat Rai appealed to the local politicians to abandon the impolitic policy of remaining outside the Congress.[74] Thus, Lajpat Rai succeeded in moulding the mind of Punjab's elite for participation in the forthcoming Congress.

Lajpat Rai led a group of twenty-eight delegates to the Bombay Congress in December 1904. He was received by Sir Henry Cotton, the Congress President. In the session, Lajpat Rai emphasised the need of a constitution for Congress. Here he gave a brief history of the agitation for a constitution. He pointed out that Lucknow Congress in 1899 was unanimous on the question of constitution and the leaders of different provinces like Surendranath Bannerjee and Raghunath Narasinha Mudholkar had signed the resolution. This resolution, Lajpat Rai said, was not the result of any impulse, neither was it framed in a hurry or carried by any chance vote, but was the deliberate decision of the Congress arrived at after careful sifting of all the pros and cons and after a very thoughtful discussion of the matter amongst the leaders as well as general body of the Congressmen.[75] In a meeting with Pherozeshah Mehta, Lajpat Rai told him that he had a firm faith in Constitutional methods but the Congress was not likely to achieve much unless it was converted into a permanent organisation and worked under some sort of a constitution.[76] The President, Sir Henry Cotton expressed his sympathy with Lajpat Rai's demands.[77] But the senior leaders of the Congress like Dadabhai Naoroji argued that the time had not yet come to give a constitution. As Duni Chand of Ambala who was present at this Bombay Congress session says:

> Both Lala Lajpat Rai and Lala Dwarka Dass pleaded in vain for a constitution for the congress, the Parsee knight coerced them into silence without much difficulty. Lala Lajpat Rai had not by that time developed that personality which he did only two years later.[79]

The Congress had not yet lost faith in the expedient of securing poiltical rights and privileges by appealing to the conscience of the British rulers. In view of the impending General Election in Britain the 1904 Congress, on the advice of Sir William Wedderburn,[80] resolved to send a delegation to place India's "claims before the British electors, before the Parliamentary candidates and before the political leaders".[81] The proposed delegates to England were Lajpat Rai, Pherozeshah Mehta, Sankaran Nair, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Surendranath Banerjee.[82] However, only two delegates, Gokhale and Lajpat Rai, were sent. Another feature of the 1904 Congress was its decision to appoint a committee to draft a new constitution for the Congress. Its members included Lajpat

Rai and Harkishan Lal representing the Punjab; Surendranath Banerjee, Ambica Charan Mazumdar and Sachchidananda Sinha representing Bengal; Pherozeshah Mehta, Dinshaw Wacha and Gokhale representing Bombay; Sankran Nair representing Madras and Madan Mohan Malaviya representing U.P.[83] Although the "Oligarchy" of the Congress formed the majority of the Committee, the decision to provide the Congress with a new constitution indicates an attempt to reconcile the radicals and close up the ranks of the Congress. Similarly, the extraordinary appointment of Lajpat Rai as an accredited delegate of the Congress to England was possibly intended to rally the Punjabi dissidents as also because he was the best fitted person[84] for such a work.

On his return from the Bombay Congress Rai published a comprehensive article entitled "Our Protest at the Last Indian National Congress" in the Panjabee in which he gave his opinions and impressions formed at the Congress thus: Firstly, it would be unpatriotic on the part of the Punjab to impair the unity of movement by seceding from it; secondly, it would be unpolitic and suicidal in the interests of the Punjab itself to do so; thirdly, that instead of dictating a constitution to the Congress, the Punjab would do better by forming a provincial organisation and working it properly, manfully, and above all with a spirit of sacrifice. He agreed with Pherozeshah Mehta that the Punjab should abandon the policy of "total inactivity in political matters". Writing about immense political and educational value of the Congress Rai said, "With it and beside it there is no other platform upon which all Indians can stand as brothers and workers in the same cause". He opined that the Congress must do some "constructive work" and those related with it should lead the way "by practical and actual work".[85]

Before his departure from Lahore for England, as a Congress delegate, Lajpat Rai had categorically stated that he did not believe in the benevolent intentions of the British electors. For political aspirations it was of no use to appeal to them in the name of political philanthropy or ethical justice. He criticised the Government of India for the tyranical rule and voiced his uncompromising attitude by emphasising that, unlike previous delegations of the Congress to England, he would mainly seek support not from the Liberals but from the Social Democratic Federation of Henry Hyndman. Making a realistic assessment of the political situation, Lajpat Rai declared that he was not over-optimistic about the results of his mission. When he arrived in London in June 1905, he found that the Liberal party was not interested in advancing the cause of Indian freedom and the British electorate were generally ignorant of and apathetic to the question of Indian reforms. The people in England were so much busy with their own problems that they could hardly devote any attention to the affairs of a distant part of the empire. The only section from which he received some sympathy and encouragement was the Labour and the Irish Members of Parliament. He became all the more convinced that they were the people from whom Indian nationalists could hope to receive support.[86]

On his arrival in London in June 1905, he was not greeted by any representative of the British Congress Committee. He was met by Shyamji Krishna Verma who took him to stay at the then newly opened India House in Highgate. Shyamji Krishna Verma founded in January, 1905 "Indian Home Rule Society" and acted as its president. His Indian Sociologist propogated Home Rule for India and he severely criticised the British Committee of the Congress. Through Shyamji Krishna Verma, Lajpat Rai met Henry Hyndman and it is to this period of Lajpat Rai's stay in England that his socialist ideas can be traced.

Lajpat Rai delivered his first speech in London at a meeting of the National Democratic League. Shyamji Krishna Verma also addressed the same meeting and he moved a resolution on Home Rule for India. Lajpat Rai supported the resolution and asked the meeting not to place any reliance on statements made by Congressmen to the effect that Indians did not want Home Rule.[87] Sir William Wedderburn and some others defended Lajpat Rai's speech.[88] On the contrary Sir Henry Cotton strongly resented Lajpat Rai's support to Shyamji Krishna Verma's resolution, and he moved a resolution in the Congress British Committee to censure Lajpat Rai and to disown him as a delegate of the Congress. In his defence, Lajpat Rai contended that as a delegate of the Congress he had by no means forfeited the liberty of expressing his own views and the motion of Sir Henry Cotton was dropped. In the first week of July, 1905, an open meeting was held to welcome Lajpat Rai as a Congress delegate under the auspices of the Stockport Labour Church and the Manchester Indian Association. It was attended by nearly 1,000 persons at Stockport. Welcoming Lajpat Rai, the president, H. Bocktwell of Manchester said:

> His learned friend, Lajpat Rai, at a considerable personal self sacrifice, had come to the country to arouse interest and to spread the agitation especially among the working classes of Lancashire and to tell of what he might call tragedy in India.[89]

In his address, Lajpat Rai said although physically separated by thousands of miles Lancashire and India, by a strange and inscrutable Providence, were closely allied. Their interests were bound together by trade and commerce. india supplied much of the raw material which was manufactured into finished articles and exported back to India. The English speaking natives of India were the consumers and the people of Lancashire were the producers. But unfortunately the consumers were consumed by poverty whereas Lancashire was increasing its wealth at the cost of Indians. Lajpat Rai also alluded to the system of education provided for the natives by the British representatives in India. They denied them schools of technical education. He condemned in a forceful language the idle and incompetent Englishmen who were sent out to official positions in India with little or no knowledge of the native vernaculars, and he related how some of the judges were so ignorant of the language as to mistake the names of animals and articles for those of human beings.[90] He condemned the excessive and growing expenditure in India on wars and other imperialistic undertakings. He was most critical of the anomolies, injustice, and persecution to which the educated natives in India were subjected by the incompetent ruling classes placed over them by the British Government. Lajpat Rai also referred to the Indian national Congress' demands for cheaper and more representative government, lighter taxation, extended and more practical education. He said that a cheaper government could be attained by the larger employment of Indians in the government services and by the reduction of military expenditure. He appealed to the Lancashire people to join the Indians in their demand for reform in the Government of India. Lajpat Rai's speech was supported by Sheikh Abdul Qadir, a Congress sympathiser.[91]

On July 19, 1905, Lajpat Rai attended an Electoral Congress at Holborn Town Hall, London. He supported the resolution asking for the payment of salaries to the Members of Parliament. He also supported a resolution which demanded that the election expenses should be borne by the State. The resolution on adult-suffrage received the greatest support from Lala Lajpat Rai. Here Lajpat Rai said that some Indians and Anglo-Indians believed that the demand of Home Rule for India was incompatible with loyalty to England, and that the Indians who made the demand or agitated for it were guilty of sedition towards the established Government of the country. If loyalty meant the acceptance of a permanent connexion of one community with the other under conditions of equality with the rest of the Empire, then he was as loyal as any Anglo-Indian could possibly be.[92] He also urged the British people not to place any reliance on the statements that the Indians did not want Home Rule for their country or that the country was prosperous or happy under the existing system.[93] In his opinion, the political subjugation of one country by another was unnatural. It was a reversal of the ordinary conditions of nature. Lajpat Rai informed his English audience that India was far from being contented under British rule; if her woes and sufferings did not reach their ears it was because she was held in a stern grip by the civil bureaucracy. The bureaucracy, he added, were sadly mistaken if they thought they could crush her spirit and keep a nation down for ever. He said that it was not the wish of the Indians to go out of the Empire; what they aspired to was the position of citizenship and fellow subjects.[94] What they asked was that England should do them justice by promoting education, by granting larger measure of self-government which would give the people a voice in the government of their own country, and by encouraging industries to increase the prosperity and happiness of the country.

Towards the end of July 1905, Lajpat Rai visited Manchester, Leads, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Islington and many other cities. He made several speeches before the British people and enjoyed the hospitality of the Indian students.[95] During August Lajpat Rai addressed a meeting of the Liberal Party at Kettering and a meeting of the Labour Party in Lancashire. He told his Labour audience that the Indians had lost faith in the Liberals and henceforth they looked hopefully to the support of the working class of England.[96] To his Liberal audience he said that the racial arrogance of Englishmen in India could no longer be tolerated, and that as long as Englishmen constituted a separate ruling class in India, Indians could not but regard them as aliens and their rule as tyrannical and unacceptable.[97]

Dadabhai Naoroji was contesting election to the House of 'Common. Lajpat Rai was not optimistic about it. After spending three months in Britain he expressed his views about Dadabhai's election in a confidential letter to Babu Ganga Prasad Verma and Gokhale thus: "It must be, however, admitted that Mr. Naoroji does not seem to possess much influence or any influence at all in official Liberal circles. For election he too depends almost exclusively on the working man". Lajpat Rai was convinced that the Liberals and the official Liberal press were not interested in advancing the cause of Indian freedom. His faith was that the Labour Party and the Irish could alone be helpful in supporting the stand of the Indian nationalists. Commenting on other parties he wrote, "the Socialist, the democrats and the liberal people are coming to the front everyday and I am of opinion that your only chance lies on them". "But here again", he added, "they will not attend much to your needs unless you are prepared to subsidise their movements by funds. The democratics, the socialists and the working men are prepared to support you provided you make it work their to do so".[98]

Since Gokhale was to arrive in London in October, lajpat Rai filled in the intervening two months with a short trip to America.[99] He addressed meetings in New York, Philadelphia and Boston, where he told his American audiences that since India was exploited by Britain, India deserved self-government. In a lecture at Boston, Lajpat Rai made the following remarks:

> The present system of Government there (in India) is very unsatisfactory, as it practically gives no voice to the people in the administration of affairs, and has resulted in bringing about an extreme condition of poverty, which causes great mortality on occasions of famine and pestilence.
>
> You are probably unaware that 10 dollars a year is the average earnings of one natives, and out of that goes 2 dollars 50 cents (10 shillings) as taxes to the Government... The present policy has ruined all Indians manufacturers, and there is no way out of the difficulty unless the Government adopts some favourable attitude. This is bound to bring on great suffering.
>
> The great burden on India is the tremendous military expenditure which has been increased by Lord Kitchener to $ 23,000,000 this year, giving India military form of Government.[100]

Although Lajpat Rai's stay in the United States lasted less than a month its significance may be described in terms of pioneering Indians political contact with the Americans.[101]

In October 1905, Lajpat Rai returned to London to join Gokhale in a lecturing tour which included London, Manchester, Leeds, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Islinglon, Hossham and Briston. In his speeches he described the poverty of Indian masses and emphasised Indian desire for self-government. In a meeting at Union church in Putney Lajpat Rai stated his aim thus: "India for the Indians, under the guidance and control of British". On October 19 at Brixton, Lajpat Rai spoke on "India and its Government", in which he severly criticised Lord Curzon's regime. He pointed out the broken promises of the Government of India, the wrongs and injustices under which the people suffered, the increasing burden of taxation, the rise in the number of famines, and the evils of the principles on which the whole government was based.[102]

When Lajpat Rai was thus explaining Indian demands and conditions before the British public, his movements were being watched by the detectives of the Central Intelligence Department. Even his house at Oxford during his absence was kept under close watch by the agents. Referring to such incidents Lajpat Rai wrote:

> On Thursday and Friday the watching business about which I wrote to you reached its climax. On Friday I was shadowed by the same man who followed me on Thursday for full four hours... I received a letter from my son informing me that more than one man watched my house at one and the same time and twice an effort was made to decoy me out after dark under the pretence of meeting an Indian near the Hampston Health Station. This has roused my suspicion and it is possible that it may be more than easily watching my movements, possible the Daily Express people are laying a trap for me .[103]

Despite this hinderance and irritation caused by the detectives of the Criminal Intelligence Department, Lajpat Rai made streneous efforts on behalf of the congress to explain India's political and economic problems in Britain and America, and rendered very useful services to the national cause. His experience there further confirmed his belief that self-reliance and self-help were the best means for the growth of Nationalism.

On 17 November, Lajpat Rai arrived in India after six months visit to England and a short visit to America. To welcome Lajpat Rai, the Bombay Congress Committee held a meeting where he advised the Indians of all castes and creeds to forget their differences and unite for the purpose of national good. He warned the Congressmen that memorials and petitions to Government had been of no avail and that the time had come when action should take the place of suggestions.[104] Lajpat Rai summed up his visit to Britain in the following words:

> The English voters and the English Press were absorbed in their own domestic problems to care about the grievances of the Indians. The Liberal Party was indifferent to Indian affairs as the Conservatives. The Liberal Party professed sincere support for Indian Home Rule, but because of its weakness the most it could do was to pass resolutions of sympathy. Hence, Indian should cease to expect any support from England and should strive themselves to achieve political reforms .[105]

He concluded that India's political salvation would depend on the efforts of her own people. It was futile to depend on the benevolence of the British rulers or Parliament for the redress of Indian grievances. He said:

> You can, at times, successfully appeal to the humanity and benevolence of individuals but to hope for justice and benevolence from a nation is hoping against hope. The rule of a foreign democracy is, in this respect, the most dangerous. The democracy is swayed by so many diverse interests and motives that it is simply impossible to expect anything like unanimity or even a preponderance of opinion in dealing justice with a subject race, because justice to a subject race often clashes or is inconsistent with the interest of some class of the ruling democracy.[106]

On his arrival in his home province, in an address delivered on the occasion of the anniversary of the Arya Samaj, on December 5, 1905, Lajpat Rai called upon Hindus and Muslims to form a united front against the foreign enemy (i.e. the Government of India) and concluded with the following words: "Our struggle for freedom must be carried on in India... the tree of the national calls for blood, let us crown our national movement with martyrdom".[107] lajpat Rai questioned the very validity of constitutional agitation in England and called for united action in India.

When Lajpat Rai was in England, Swadeshi and boycott movements were inaugurated in India as a protest against the partition of Bengal. Under the new partition scheme, which was effected on October 16, 1905, Assam, Dacca Division, Chittagong Division, Rajshahi Division excluding Darjeeling but including the State of Hill Tippera were formed into a new province, Eastern Bengal and Assam.

Although the ostensible motive for the partition was promotion of administrative efficiency but there was also a political factor which could not remain unconcealed. In February 1905 Curzon had written to John Brodrick: "Calcutta is the centre from which the Congress Party is manipulated throughout the whole of Bengal and indeed the whole of India. Its best wire pullers, its most frothy orators all reside there. They dominate public opinion. The whole of their activity is directed to create an agency so powerful that they may one day be able to force a weak Government to give them what they desired".[108] The Government attempted to weaken this class through the partition of Bengal.

The partition was regarded by the Bengalis, not as an isolated measure, but as the climax of Lord Curzon's unpopular policies. It evoked an unprecedented wave of protests culminating in the Swadeshi and Boycott movements. These movements were the outstanding features that distinguished the anti-partition agitation from any former Indian protest against the policy of the Government of India. It is difficult to ascertain their precise origin, yet early advocacy of Swadeshi and boycott as an economic and political doctrine can be traced in the later half of the nineteenth century in India. In 1873, some inhabitants of Poona 'determined to wear no cotton fabrics but those of home production'.[109] Swadeshi companies were formed at Bombay, Ahmedabad, Surat, Satara, Sholapur, Nagpur and other places. In December 1875, "Ahmedabad Swadesh Udyam Vardhak Mandali" was founded for popularising Indian products.[110] In 1881, the President of the Arya Samaj, Lala Sain Dass of Lahore, publicly wore Swadeshi clothes and preached economic and political merits of Swadeshi.[111] In 1896, Tilak advocated

Swadeshi and boycott in Maharashtra, and in 1897, *Rabindra* nath Tagore established *Swadeshi* shops in Bengal.[112] In 1900, at the Lahore Congress, Lajpat Rai attempted to commit the Congress to the promotion of *Swadeshi* but without much success.

After partition of Bengal several newspapers of the Punjab began to publish articles on *Swadeshi* and Boycott movement. *The Sat Dharm Pracharak* of September 15, 1905, saw the benefits of the country and the people in *Swadeshi*.[113] The *Arya Gazatte* of September 21, 1905, "published an article written by Nanak Chand, a student of B.A. class of the D.A.V.College, Lahore and made the people to understand that the *Swadeshi* was a weapon for getting political freedom for the country.[114] *The Panjabee* of September 25, 1905, said, "All that is necessary... is a firm determination joined to sustain industry, and our *Swadeshi* gospel would become a supreme regenerator of our dead and drooping industries in a short time; the same gospel would be a powerful constitutional weapon in the hands of the people to make the rulers of the land concede to them their just political demand... and in *Swadeshism* lies their terrestrial salvation.[115] *The Arya Messenger* of the same year appealed to the Samajic leaders to take active part in the *Swadeshi* movement.

Lajpat Rai was of the opinion that unity was a great factor for the success of the *Swadeshi* movement.[116] He also called upon the students to shed their blood for the promotion of the idea of *Swadeshi*.[117] During the year 1906, he continued and delivered lectures on the *Swadeshi* movement. While speaking at the Punjab Provincial Conference held at Ambala on September 29-30, 1906, he said that the educated community of the Punjab should pay greater attention to the political movements (including Swadeshi) of the country and create real political environments among the masses for the success of the movement.[118] Referring to the usefulness of the *Swadeshi* and Boycott movements in Bengal, he said, "They have raised the people to a consciousness of their power, they have taught the use of combination and for once in the history of British India the industrial and the wage earning classes in this country seem to be realising that their destiny and their bread is in their hands and not in the hands of those handful of people who lord it over them..."[119] On March 27, 1907, he delivered a lecture in Allahabad on the New Spirit. He drew attention of the people towards the Swadeshi movement and pointed out the means to be adopted to improve it. He advised the Indians to boycott British courts and start Swadeshi panchayats for the adjudication of their disputes.[120] He presided at the All India Swadeshi Conference in Surat in 1907 and delivered a long lecture appealing Hindus and Muslims to unite themselves for the success of the movement.[121] At Cownpur, he delivered a speech on the same topic on January 18, 1908, and said that there were three kinds of Swadeshi - political, Social and Economic. Speaking on social and economic kinds of Swadeshi he said that the famine was due to the poverty of the country caused by want of arts and industries. Protective duties, according to him, were necessary, but the Indian Government being under the influence of European traders and merchants, was unable to improve them.[122] The economic emancipation of India was dear to his heart and for this he considered self-reliance and self-help as essential as for political freedom. In the correspondence columns of the Tribune one comes across ample evidence of his interest in improving the material resources of India.[123] He was not pleased to see the gradual decline of the Indian trading class, like that of the artisans, for the business was going into the hands of Europeans.[124] He wanted Indian businessmen to take up the export of wheat to Europe which was in the hands of foreign business houses. For obtaining maximum advantage of modern science and technology for development of Indian industry he emphasised again and again the urgent need for technical education of the right type.[125] He was also an ardent advocate of joint stock companies for finding adequate capital for industrial development of the country. He wanted Indians to take to modern banking, and he was one of the promoters of the Punjab National Bank which was founded in 1895.

Thus, Lajpat Rai was the staunch supporter of the Swadeshi Movement which stimulated the idea of nationalism and the struggle for freedom. This movement became the popular weapon of the Indian National Congress and other progressives after the partition of Bengal in 1905.

On his return from Britain in 1905, Lajpat Rai assumed command of the Punjab Congress and pressed his hesitant followers to make the boycott movement successful. His experience in England had convinced him that only a powerful economic lever such as boycott would move India Office in Britain to change its policy towards India.[126] He exhorted every province to act like Bengal. He described the boycott of English goods as the most effective way of bringing the Government to its senses and most telling to England. He said that the people of Bengal had done nothing illegal in resorting to the boycott of English goods as a political weapon.[127] He advised his countrymen, "if we cannot do without foreign goods, let us import them, from Japan and China first, and from Germany, France or the United States next". He considered his scheme as an effective method of constituional agitation.[128] Lajpat Rai fully supported the Bengal agitation and emphasised the use of indigenous goods.

Before the Benaras Congress in 1905, Lajpat Rai published a comprehensive scheme to make the Congress more active and truly representative of the nation. This scheme was the result of his practical experience which he had gained in England. He had acquired considerable knowledge of English political system and its working and the struggle of working classes for improving their conditions and securing better rights from the Government. Consequently, his ideas and suggestions were, in his own words, "mature". On August 3, 1905, in a letter to Babu Ganga Prasad Verma, Lajpat Rai wrote about the next Congress thus: "I am of opinion that we should not erect a pandal nor should we in the Congress Committee arrange for the accommodation of delegates or visitors. At any rate, we should fix one day for monster meeting – a great demonstration of at least a lac of people on the bank of the Ganges in the open air to protest against the policy of Lord Curzon". "From the Ganges", he added, "the whole assembly should return to the city in procession saying national songs". "After this", he further added, "you can have your ordinary Congress for two days consisting of not more than 200 delegates.[129] He was of the opinion that "a demonstration of a 100,000 people thus collected as a protest against the policy of Lord Curzon will carry more weight and will impress the people in England more than any number of your Congress".[130] In an article Lajpat Rai advised the non-official members of the Legislative Council to organise a central office and to guide the Provincial Congress Committee. He wrote: "the time has come for more vigorous measures and for a substantial change in the methods of our agitation".[131] He further wrote: "We ought to improve upon the general annual demonstration at the Congress session by arranging to bring about a greater and a bigger meeting every year attended by no less than a hundred thousand persons from all parts of India. The educational and the political value of such gathering cannot be over-estimated. Let the next session of the Congress at Benaras set the example".[132] Lajpat Rai believed that actual deliberative work of the Congress should be done by a smaller conference attended by not more than a hundred of the best men of the country. Two whole days might be reserved for this work and one day for popular demonstration, at which speeches might be delivered to the assembled masses from different platforms by different men in their own vernaculars. The executive and administrative work of guiding the movement all round the year should be done by a smaller standing committee of 20 to 30 men. That committee should meet at least two or three times a year.[133]

It is obvious that Lajpat Rai was anxious to change the old methods of the Congress. He was keen to take the Congress message to the masses and make it popular and truly representative of the national demands.

The struggle within the Congress was growing. The younger generation wanted to make the congress more active. They had succeeded at the Bombay Congress in getting a committee appointed for drafting a constitution for the Congresss. Lajpat Rai was one of those who had supported this resolution. The partition of Bengal had proved the hollowness of Congress policies and methods. In this background Tilak decided to present a programme of action through Boycott, Swadeshi, National Education and the demand of Swaraj as the ultimate goal of the people in the Benaras Congress. Lajpat Rai fully supported this programme, but he did not want to create rift within the Congress. At the same time he did not know as to how this schism could be avoided. As the Panjabee put it: "The hour of the inevitable parting of ways has come for our national Assembly. It should either decide to take advantage of the new spirit and launch out a bold policy or resign its own death".[134] It was in these circumstances that Lajpat Rai reached Benaras to attend the twenty-first session of the Congress in 1905.

The controversy at the Benaras Congress centred on the subject Committee's deliberation over the proposal to pass a resolution welcoming the Prince of Wales, later king George V, to India. The resolution was opposed by Lajpat Rai who argued that the "severe famine prevailed in the country and people were dying of hunger; besides the Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon had created great unrest. To call the Prince of Wales at the moment was bureaucratic subterfuge, the intention of the invitors being to allay political unrest by diverting public attention to gala shows".[135] Lajpat Rai along with other leaders tried to prevent the adoption of this resolution and they wrote the following to the President of the Congress:

> We the undersigned delegates beg respectually to bring to your notice that we hold that there is not even a constitutional necessity for adopting the first resolution regarding the proposed wire of welcome to their Royal Highnesses, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and therefore humbly request you to drop the same as otherwise we shall be constrained to raise an opposition in the Congress Pandal.
>
> Sd/- G.S.Khaparde
> B.G.Tilak
> Lajpat Rai and
> Many Others.[136]

When the resolution was carried by the majority in the Subject Committee, Lajpat Rai warned that he would oppose its passage again in the general meeting of the National Congress. His threat infuriated the loyalists who counterwarned Lajpat Rai and Tilak not to act as "sedition mongers" and "badmashes". The Chairman of the Reception Committee, Munshi Madho Lal, informed the police that he expected a riot during the opening of the session, and he ensured the presence of the Deputy Commissioner of Police in the Congress pavillion.[137]

The imminent rift was averted, however, by Gokhale's appeal to Lajpat Rai and asking him to waive opposition for his sake. "To this" writes Lajpat Rai, "I agreed and gave him a promise that we would abstain from attending the sitting whilst this resolution was being dealt with that we might not to have to oppose it; the understanding was that in the record it would not be said that the resolution was accepted unanimously".[138] But two young Bengalis - J.N.Roy and R.Ray refused to carry out the decision and were forcebly kept out of the session.[139] Thus, the welcome resolution was carried.

Again on the question of Boycott, Lajpat Rai along with Khaparde and Tilak wanted to extend its scope and application. They wished to bring about a basic change in Congress policies and ideology. In the atmosphere of popular discontent they endeavoured to broaden the Congress movement. But the 1905 Congress was a personal triumph of Gokhale. By his stature, reputation and eloquent pleading he succeeded in meeting the attacks of his opponents, and the Congress, in a great measure, retained its old image.

Gokhale, the Congress President, in his important address said: "The aim of the Congress is that India should be governed in the interests of the Indians themselves, and that in the course of time a form of government should be attained in this country similar to what exists in the self-governing colonies of the British Empire".[140] Referring to the anti-partition agitation, Gokhale praised Swadeshi but cautioned against Boycott. He explained that the term "boycott" meant a vindictive desire to injure another and emphasised that "such a desire on our part as a normal feature of relations with England is of course out of the question".[141]

But Lajpat Rai impressed upon Congressmen that Boycott ushered "the dawn of a new political era for India". "I must tell you", he continued "that the message which the people of England wanted to send you through me was the message that in our utterance, in our agitations and in our fight and struggle for liberty, we ought to be more manly than we have been hitherto. An Englishman hates or dislikes nothing like beggary. Therefore, it is our duty to show Englishman that we have risen to the sense of consciousness, that we are no longer beggars and that we are subjects of an Empire where people are struggling to achieve that position which is their right by right of natural law... They (Bengal) have exhibited a spirit in this battle which has to be commended to other Provinces of India. If the other Provinces of India will just follow their example, I say, the day is not far distant when England will grant our rights. But if you simply go there (to England) as a beggar without the consciousness of your power to demand your rights, you go there simply to be rejected.... Therefore, as friends of government, as friends of order, we warn Government against treading this path of danger and difficulty. Let Government remember and let you, gentlemen, also remember that people once awakened and awakened rightly cannot be put down. It is impossible for the Government of India after a century of British rule, after a century of liberal education, to put us down like dogs and slaves".[142] Lajpat Rai justified resort to passive resistance in the political movement and congratulated Bengal for heralding a new political era for the country. He stressed the urgent need for "a band of earnest missionaries to work out the political regeneration of the country", and said that it was a matter of shame that the Congress during its tewenty-one years had not produced any 'political Sanyasis' prepared to sacrifice their lives for the regeneration of India.[143] The speech created a stir in the Congress camp. The old leaders did not relish its tone but it made a visible impact on the audience. "It was one of the strongest, most impetuous and stormy speeches that ever he had delivered" is the opinion of V.S.Srinivasa Sastri.[144] The same evening Romesh Chandra Dutt communicated to Lajpat Rai that his speech was "the best of all delivered at the Congress Session" and that "he liked it immensely".[145]

As many C.I.D. people in ordinary dress were among the delegates, Lajpat Rai could have been entrapped into trouble but for the foresight of Krishna Swami Aiyer and Manu Swami Aiyer (the latter was Congress reporter). Krishna Aiyer told him, "Please omit all these passeges in Lajpat Rai's speech, and he made Gokhale to repeat the same".[146]

Lajpat Rai fully supported the Congress resolutions on boycott and Swadeshi. He expressed the yearnings of the new generation in a powerful and eloquent manner. He greatly emphasised the necessity of adopting stronger, bolder and more vigorous measures. He openly expressed his disapproval of the "old" methods and policies of the Congress; he characterised them as inadequate, halting and incapable of achieving the aims of the country. But at the same time he did not want to do anything which might have the slightest effect of impairing the unity and strength of the Congress organisation.

Lajpat Rai and his friends' demand was not heeded by the 1905 congress on the question of boycott. The Panjabee reacted in the following editorial: "If the Congress persist in the present infatuated policy of disgraceful inaction and contemptible talk heedless of the demand made on them for action, the country will come to regard them as a body of ambitious imbeciles or a society of self-seekers who are sacrificing the real interests of their country on the altar of their vanity or own aggrandisement. Speeches without action are demoralising. If the Congress be hopelessly wedded to impotent rhetoric and despicable pomp, the people who have been crying for action should combine and start a Congress of work".[147] Describing the character of the proposed new Congress, the Panjabee added that it should concentrate on imparting political education to the masses by regular weekly meetings and by issuing pamphlets in the vernaculars.[148]

To sum up, we may say Lajpat Rai appeared on the platform of the Indian National Congress as a member of one of backward districts of Punjab when it (Congress) had made its three years history. Its early history, policies and methods were based on resolutions, petitions and prayers. Lajpat Rai condemned such methods and strove hard to expose the hollowness of the Congress methods. For this, he gave forceful speeches, wrote articles and adopted the policy of keeping himself aloof for sometime from the sessions of the Congress. He wanted to make the Congress more active, practical and popular among the masses. He emphasised self-reliance and self-help to achieve political emancipation. His suggestions became guidelines for the twentieth century. Lajpat Rai started to influence the Congress ideology within the Congress sessions. He was on the side of the Nationalists in attacking the Congress policies and methods. But his close relations with the old leaders and the role within the Congress sessions gave him an independent stature. His leadership also influenced the growing political consciousness in the Punjab. Lajpat Rai's eloquent speeches in England and a short visit to America reflected his far-sightedness and these proved very useful in educating the English opinion about India.

Notes and References

1. Letter, April 10, 1905, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, Gokhale Papers. See also Panjabee (Lahore), April 10, 1905.

2. Before the emergence of the Indian National Congress, there were a number of organisations established in different provinces to voice the public opinion in the country. The first was 'British India Association' in 1851 and "Bombay Association" superseded this body in the seventies of the last century. In Maharashtra there was the "Poona Sarvajanik

Sabha'. But perhaps the most important step in this direction was the foundation of the 'Indian Association' in 1876 by Surendranath Banerjee. See S.R. Mehrotra, The Emergence of the Indian National Congress (Delhi, 1971).

3. Mazumdar, A.C., Indian National Evolution (Madras, 1917), p. 151.

4. Congress resolution - vide Home Department G.O.I. (Public-A), Progs. 55-58 of April, 1902; - vide Report of the Congress Session from year to year (1885-1914).

5. Ibid.

6. Buch, M.A., Rise and Growth of Indian Liberalism (Baroda, 1938), pp. 190-191.

7. Basu, Bhupender Nath, Legislative Assembly Debates (Feb. 8, 1910), p.116.

8. Modern Review, Vol. XXV, June to July 1909, p. 142.

9. Ibid., January to June 1909, p. 542.

10. Report of the Fourth Indian National Congress, Allahabad, 1888, p. 3.

11. Congress Resolutions - vide Home Department, G.O.I. (Public-A), Progs. 55-58 of April, 1920; Reports of the Congress Session from year to year (1885-1914).

12. Home Department, G.O.I. (Public-A), Progs. 16 of February 1902.

13. Hiralal Singh, Problems and Policies of the British in India (Bombay, 1963), pp. 227-228.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid., p. 228.

16. Speech at St. Andrew's Dinner, Calcutta, November 30, 1888, vide Banerjee, A.C., Indian Constitutional Developments (No.84) pp. 56-57.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. Quoted in Hira Lal Singh, op. cit., p. 22.

20. Denouncing the Congress demand for more representative institutions in India, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan said that "while representative Government could succeed in a homogeneous country like Britain, where there existed a strong national feeling; in India, where the people were not homogeneous but were divided by profound religious and other differences, the introduction of representative government, pure and simple, would be productive of much evil, because as the Indian people, unlike the British people, would vote on the basis of religion and not political differences, the majority community, the Hindus would completely dominate the Indian Parliament and establish a government English in name, but Hindu in reality. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, The Present State of Indian Politics (1888), p. 61. See also Syed Ahmed's speech in the Proceedings of the Council of the Governor Geneal of India, (1883), p. 20.

21. Letter, January 24, 1888, Syed Ahmed Khan to Tyabji, vide P.Hardy, The Muslims of British India (Cambridge University Press, 1972), pp. 129.

22. Lajpat Rai, Young India (Lahore, 1927), pp. 133-34.

23. Ibid.

24. Lajpat Rai's Writings and Speeches, Vol. I, p.196.

25. Ibid., p. 4.

26. Ibid., p. 9.

27. Ibid., p. 15.

28. Lajpat Rai: Autobiographical Writings, p. 84.

29. Report of the fourth Indian National Congress, Allahabad, 1888, p. 23.

30. Report of the Fifth Indian National Congress, Bombay 1889, p. xxv.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. Lajpat Rai: Autobiographical Writings, p. 86.

35. Hume, A.O., "The Indian National Congress, Its Origin, Aims and Object". Speech Delivered at Allahabad on April 3, 1886. Quoted in D.Argov, Moderates and Extremists in the Indian Nationalist Movement, 1885-1920 (Delhi, 1967), p. 63.

36. Ibid.

37. Lajpat Rai, op. cit., p. 88.

38. Ibid., pp. 87-88.

39. Report of the Nineth indian national Congress, Lahore, 1893, p. 121.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid., pp. 92-94.

43. Ibid.

44. The People (Lahore), Fenruary 8, 1929.

45. The Tribune (Lahore), October 24, 1899.

46. Ibid.

47. The Tribune (Lahore), October 24, 1899.

48. Report of the Indian Famine Commission, 1901 (Calcutta, 1908), p. 77.

49. Report of the Sixteenth I.N.C., Lahore, 1900, p. 80.

50. Ibid., p. 70.

51. Ibid., Resolution XXV, p. 79.

52. In the Second Congress held in Calcutta in 1886, a delegate from the Punjab, Hukam Chand said: "We shall try to compete with England by establishing such industries as would support our own artisans and by purchasing things from them". But his speech was cut short and his suggestion was dismissed. Vide Report of the Second Indian national Congress, 1886, p. 65.

53. Report of the Sixteenth I.N.C.. Lahore 1900, p.29.

54. 466 members from Punjab attended the Congress.

55. Report of the Sixteenth I.N.C., Lahore, 1900, pp. 79.

56. Dhananjay Keer has given an interesting account of their meeting at Lahore ... "Lajpat Rai invited Tilak to dine with him and to meet a few friends there. Lajpat Rai inquired from Tilak whether he would take food prepared by his wife or he should have it prepared by a particular caste of Brahmin if necessary. For Lajpat Rai observed 'he (Tilak) was an orthodox revivalist. I was a social reformer. he was a pucca Sanatanist'. Tilak, however, dined with Lala Lajpat Rai".

57. Kayastha Samachar, August 1901, pp. 131-135.

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid., November 1901, p. 377.

60. Kayastha Samachar, November 1901, p. 132.

61. Ibid. pp. 279-385.

62. Out of the total number of 896, 580 were from Bengal.

63. Kayastha Samachar, "the Indian National Congress", January 1902, p. 58.

64. In his presidential speech, Dinshaw Wacha declared, "Many a vague idea is now floating in the air which require to be definitely formulated, and many crude and ill-digested recommendations need to be ... tested before we can all agree upon a common basis on which a fair attempt at industrial development might be made. Report of the Seventeenth Indian National Congress, Calcutta, 1901, p. 68.

65. The Tribune, January 28, 1902, editorial.

66. Ibid., October 1, November 5, 1901.

67. East and West, August 1902, Vol. I, p. 1040.

68. Ibid., p. 1041.

69. Nanda, B.R., Gokhale, Gandhi and the Nehrus (London, 1974), p. 17.

70. Lajpat Rai: Writings and Speeches, Vol. II, p. 82.

71. Report of the Twenty-first I.N.C., Beneras, 1905, pp. 74-75.

72. The Tribune, printed a dozen letters during 1904.

73. The Panjabee (Lahore) October 3, 1904. "The Congress after 19 sessions of enthusiastic political work, finds the position of the country in many respects worse than it was at the commencement. The liberty of speech and freedom of the press

have been seriously curtailed; local self government, except in name has been a thing of the past; a very cruel damper has been put on higher education; the independence of Universities taken away and last but not least, private enterprise in education has been emphatically discouraged if not actually vetoed".

74. The Tribune, December 14, 17, 1904. Also see Panjabee, December 12, 19, 1904.

75. Panjabee, March 6, 1905.

76. Ibid.

77. Ibid.

78. Panjabee (Lahore), March 6, 1905.

79. Duni Chand, Ulster of India (Lahore, 1936), p. 86. See also The Punjabee, March 6, 1905.

80. Sir William Wedderburn, The vetern Congress leader in England, wrote in the columns of India of the 11th December that "the present is the golden opportunity of India for making the British Electorate acquainted with her woes and miserable condition and generally rousing the English public on her behalf". "Pressure and persuasion", he added "must be brought to bear at every stage of the proceedings, in the new political situation and the Congress must appeal, at each centre of influence, to British public opinion, to the parliamentary electors, to the candidates at the general elections, and especially to the prominent public men who are likely soon to occupy the place of power". The Panjabee , December 12, 1904.

81. Report of the Twentieth I.N.C., Bombay, 1904, Resolution XV.

82. Report of the Twentieth Indian National Congress, Bombay, 1904, p. 151.

83. Ibid.

84. In a letter, D.E.Wacha earnestly suggested Lajpat Rai's name as the representative of the province. *The Panjabee* also felt that "he was the best fitted person to take the responsibility on his shoulders, by the mental equipment no less than by his earnestness in the public cause and devotion to duty". Vide *The Panjabee* (Lahore) March 20, 1905.

85. *The Panjabee*, March 6, 1905.

86. *The Panjabee*, May 15, 1905. Also see letter, August 3, 1905, Lajpat Rai to Ganga Prasad Varma, London, *Gokhale Papers*.

87. Lajpat Rai, *op. cit*., p. 105.

88. *Ibid*.

89. *India* (London) August 4, 1905, p. 54.

90. *Ibid*.

91. *Ibid*.

92. *Ibid*.

93. *Ibid*.

94. *Ibid*.

95. Lajpat Rai, *Autobiographical Writings*, p. 106.

96. *India* (London), August 4, 1905.

97. *Ibid*.

98. Letter, August 3, 1905, Lajpat rai to Babu Ganga Prasad Varma, *Gokhale Papers.*

99. *Ibid*.

100. *Home Department, G.O.I. (Public/Political-A)*, Nos. 148-235, August 1907.

101. *Ibid*.

102. *Home Department, G.O.I. (Public/Political-A), Nos. 148-235*, August 1907.

103. Letter (Monday) undated (1905), Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, *Gokhale Papers*.

104. *Home Department, G.O.I.(Public/Political-A)*, Nos. 148-235., August, 1907.

105. "India and English party Politics", Speech at Lahore, November 26, 1905, *The Indian Review*, November 1905, pp. 750-51.

106. "Indian Patriotism towards the Empire", *Hindustan Review*, Vol. XIV (1906), pp. 420-48.

107. *P.N.N.R.*, *Paisa Akhbar*, December 12 and 13, 1905.

108. Quoted from Curzon's convocation speech delivered at Calcutta University, February 11, 1905, See *Curzon Speeches*, Vol. IV (Calcutta, 1906), p. 83.

109. Chandra, S., *Dependence and Disillusionment* (New Delhi, 1975), pp. 125-126.

110. *Ibid*.

111. Lajpat Rai, *Autobiographical Writings*, p. 88.

112. *Home Department, G.O.I.(Political)*, Progs. 7312, Nos. 205, January 25, 1906.

113. *The Sat Dharm Pracharak*, September 15, 1905.

114. *The Arys Gazette*, September 21, 1905.

115. *The Panjabee*, September 25, 1905.

116. *The Paisa Akhbar*, December 13, 1905.

117. *Ibid*.

118. *The Panjabee*, October 10 and 13, 1906.

119. The Panjabee, October 10 and 13, 1906.

120. Home Department (Political-A), August 1907, Nos. 148, 235.

121. Home Department (Deposit), November 190 of No.7.

122. Home Department (Political-B), February, 1908, Nos. 105-112.

123. The Tribune, February 5 and 9, 1891.

124. Home Department (Political-B), February, 1908, Nos. 105-112.

125. The Kayastha Samachar, August, 1901.

126. The Panjabee, November 3, 1905.

127. Ibid., December 11, 1905.

128. Hindustan review, October-November 1905, pp. 355-56.

129. Letter August 3, 1905, Lajpat Rai to Ganga Prasad Verma, Gokhale Papers.

130. Ibid.

131. Hindustan Review, October-November 1905, pp. 355-356.

132. Ibid.

133. Ibid.

134. The Panjabee, December 18, 1905.

135. Lajpat Rai, Autobiographical Writings, p. 110.

136. Letter December 27, 1905, from some delegates of the Congress Camp, Benaras, to the President, Indian National Congress, Gokhale Papers.

137. Lajpat Rai, op. cit., p. 111.

138. Lajpat Rai, op. cit, p. 111.

139. C.Y.Chintamani, Indian Politics Since Mutiny (London, 1940) p.111.

140. Report of the twenty-first Indian National Congress, Benaras 1905, p. 13.

141. Ibid., p. 11.

142. Ibid., p. 74.

143. Ibid.

144. V.S.Srinivasa Sastri, Life and Times of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta (Madras, 1945), p. 89.

145. Lajpat Rai, Autobiographical Writings, p. 111.

146. V.S.Srinivasa Sastri, op. cit., p. 89.

147. Punjab Native Newspapers Report, Panjabee, January 10, 1906.

148. Ibid., January 13, 1906.

Chapter 2

LAJPAT RAI AND THE NATIONALIST MOVEMENT, 1905-14

Lord Curzon had departed from India when Lajpat Rai returned from England in November 1905. The last days of his regime were marked by a new political ferment largely created by oppressive and anti-Indian policies of the Government. Convinced that the British rule was "juster, purer and more beneficiant than either any other foreign rule or the rule of Indians themselves", he believed that India must be governed autocratically. His failure to recognise Indian demands and aspirations lent a new robustness and appeal to Indian nationalism. In 1905 India was vibrating with a new life, and there were signs of the 'New Spirit' in the air.

The partition of Bengal followed by the Swadeshi and boycott agitations convulsed the country. The political basis of the empire as well as the economic policies of the Government were severely attacked. Economically, the unrest was seen as largely owing to the belief strongly held by "three-fourths of the educated class" that the economic policy of the Government was "radically unsound and grossly unfair to India". People quoted Bradlaugh, Digby and Naoroji, and maintained that the 'drain' to England was the real cause of the poverty of the people.[1] People were hard hit by rising prices inside the country. The Government were convinced that there were economic causes for the political discontent. Authorities at home were informed that in Bengal the middle classes from which the politicians came, generally had fixed income, i.e. wages of government and zamindari services, and the people were badly affected by the continuous rise in prices over many years. Some suggested a rise in wages as a ready remedy against rising prices, but others opposed it.

The Government's refusal to meet the political and economic demands and its repressive measures against the growing national movement shook the faith of an increasing number of Indians in the ideology and technique of Liberal Nationalism. They began to rally round the group of militant nationalists (the Extremists), who drew inspiration from India's past, invoked the great episodes in the history of the Indian people, and tried to infuse national pride and self-respect among them. They criticised the idealizing of the western and specially British culture by the Liberals. The Extremists asserted that this would only breed an inferiority complex among the Indians and sap their national pride and self-confidence so vital to the struggle for freedom. In Bengal a mass passive resistance movement was launched. Many Congress leaders, so far Moderates believing in strictly constitutional methods, were swept into it.

The new leaders, called the 'Nationalists' or 'Extremists', were impatient with the 'medicant' policy of the Congress and wanted to infuse militancy into its programme. They had no faith in resolutions, prayers and petitions for liberating the country from alien rule. The partition of Bengal proved a blessing in disguise for the Extremists who were led by ardent patriots like B.G.Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghose. Lajpat Rai too subscribed to their political ideology so far as he accepted Swaraj, Swadeshi and Boycott as the new religion of India. During his stay in London he had witnessed some mass demonstrations and Lajpat Rai advocated the use of such methods to create an effect on the British Raj. He advocated a change in the nature of the Congress programme with a view to enlisting support of a wider section of the Indian people for the national movement. From London, in a letter to Babu Ganga Prasad Verma of Lucknow, Lajpat Rai had written:

> Unless you are prepared to change the nature of your (Congress) movement in this direction

> you are not likely to make any progress towards political freedom at all and I am sure that if the Congress will not take the initiative in this matter, some other movement may have to be set up to do the same and them the Congress will dwindle into insignificance.[2]

But the Congress leadership was not, by and large, in favour of such a change. Lajpat Rai was with the Extremists in criticising the "old" methods of the Congress. He did not place any reliance on English promises or their sense of justice. But he differed from them as to the ultimate aim of the Indians and the methods of agitation. The Extremists like Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghose rejected the methods of the Moderates as well as their aim of colonial self-government. To them conciliation between Indian patriotism and loyalty to the empire was anathema, and the idea of self-governing India within the empire a contradiction between two incompatible entities. On the contrary, Lajpat Rai and Tilak never conceived of Swaraj as complete independence from Britain. They would have been satisfied with a larger measure of self-government. Lajpat Rai favoured the limited objective of Dominion Status. He wanted to steer clear of extreme views and strike the golden mean. He was not for severing links with the British Commonwealth: "We are not even now averse to remain with the British Commonwealth, if we are allowed to remain on our terms, by our free choice and by our free will and we will decide that question, when the time comes, on its merits in the light of our own interests and not by coercion or fear".[3] In April, 1908 Lajpat Rai supported the Allahabad Convention's resolution which reaffirmed that the Congress did not desire to leave the empire and would strive for the ideal of colonial self-government taking recourse only to methods of constitutional agitation. In 1919 Lajpat Rai again made a summing up of the objective the country had in view: "The Moderates want colonial self-government step by step and so do the Extremists".[4] Lajpat Rai, therefore, was in favour of colonial self-government and constitutional agitation.

Lajpat Rai and Tilak were two prominent leaders of the freedom struggle. Both leaders were social reformers, educationists, journalists and had regard for each other. But they differed on certain ideas. Tilak endeavoured to secure national freedom by attacking all kinds of external authority forcibly imposed on India. He considered that national regeneration was to be secured through the elimination of foreign domination. Tilak subordinated all other considerations to this end.[5] On the contrary, Lajpat Rai did not want to make unflinching attack on the bureaucracy, for a mission of moral re-generation was the dominant note in his life. He wanted to secure national freedom through the improvement of social and national efficiency which would accelerate the attainment of national freedom and preserve it to the glory of the nation. Although both leaders believed in the desirability of propaganda in foreign countries but Lajpat Rai was superior to Tilak in realising the need of this sort of propaganda as early as 1905. Tilak recognised it only on his visit to England in 1919, that the Indian political freedom could best be won by conducting propaganda in America and the European countries and thus gaining international sympathy for India.[6]

On his return from Benaras Congress in January 1906, Lajpat Rai found an awkward situation in the Punjab. Some Congressmen who had sympathy with the Moderates were not satisfied with his role in the last session of the Indian national Congress. They charged him that he had betrayed Gokhale in England and in the Benaras Congress. He was also accused for his intimacy with Tilak. Alfred Nundy, the new Editor of the Tribune, wrote articles against his attitude. The fact was that Lajpat Rai's independent position was misunderstood by some people in the Punjab.[7] He was a man who had his own status and broad nationalistic outlook. On March 3, 1906, in a letter to Gokhale, Lajpat Rai wrote about this controversy thus: "Some mischievous people with whom I have had extensive differences in the Arya Samaj have been trying to give out in the column of the Vernacular Press in this province that during the last session of the Indian National Congress I tried to spread libellous remarks about your work in England and attempted to create difficulties in your way in guiding the proceedings of the Indian National Congress".[8] He refuted the allegation and added: "I am proud of fact that in connection with the work of the Congress deputation to England my name has been associated with you".[9] In another letter to Gokhale, Lajpat Rai wrote: "Thus whole country feels proud of you and is very grateful to you for the example of duty and sacrifice that you are holding to them in your person".[10] He drew inspiration from Gokhale and sought his advice for political work. "What line will you advise me personally to adopt with regard to political work? You know my sympathies are in the direction of self-help and self-reliance. I can devote most of my time to political work if i can once determine what is told in that line".[11] He even instructed the Indian Association of Lahore to collect subscriptions to meet the expenses of Gokhale's proposed visit to England in 1906.[12] Lajpat Rai held in high esteem by both Gokhale and Tilak, and felt a genuine pride in claiming the goodwill and friendship of both.[13] All his efforts were, therefore, directed towards maintaining unity in the national camp.

Lajpat Rai was surprised at the virulent Moderates' opposition, and fearing that continued controversy would imperil the growth of constructive political programme he made an effort to heal the schism in the Punjab. He was also keen to take the Congress message to the masses. The September 1906 provincial conference at Ambala gave Lajpat Rai an opportunity to achieve these objectives. By minimising doctrinal differences and appealing for unity, Lajpat Rai won Moderates' support. He also succeeded in convincing them the necessity of establishing District Congress branches which would carry on systematic agitation over "meaningful" issues such as income tax rate, British Zulum (oppression) and begar (pressing of people into service without payment). He emphasised the importance of spreading the Congress movement to the mofussil. As a result of his efforts the Punjab Congress had branches in over twenty district towns by February 1907. At the same meeting Lajpat Rai tried to gain political support of all communities. He said that Punjab Congress would remain non-sectarian and would take up only broad issues pertaining to the entire educated classes.[14] The strategy was successful. Several prominent Muslims led by Fazal-i-Husain established a pro-Congress Muslim League and co-operated in the meetings sponsored by Lajpat Rai.[15]

The gulf between the leaders of the Indian National Congress was fast growing since its last session. As a leader of the Punjab Congress, Lajpat Rai did not want his province to join this unnecessary controversy. In an editorial Lajpat Rai explained the neutral position of the Punjab Congress towards the national leaders thus:

> So far as we in the Punjab are concerned, we feel real and sincere respect both for Mr. Gokhale and Mr. Tilak. We admire the work of both Babu Surendra Nath Banerjee as well as that of Bipin Chandra Pal.[16]

He had intense desire to maintain unity and avert split in the national organisation. He described that controversy "extremely silly", and held both groups resposible for this development.[17] He did not relish the extravagant attacks on the "old" leader though he regretted that they had failed to change with the times.[18] He also blamed the "old" leaders for their unreasonable suspicion about Tilak, whom the new leaders wanted to elect the President of the next Congress. He advised the Congressmen to accept the decision of Reception Committee with good grace. He also stated that the decision of the majority should bind all.[19] Thus, Lajpat Rai was in favour of a united Congress.

By December 1906, when the Indian National Congress met at Calcutta, the differences between the Extremists and Moderates had become sharpened and a fierce controversy raged. The first issue was the election of President. The Extremists suggested that as Punjab had not provided a President for the Congress, it might be appropriate to elect Lajpat Rai to the office.[20] But the Moderates were not ready to accept the candidature of any Extremist who demanded a constitution. They complained: "Behind all is Tilak who, knowing how he is regarded by the sober section of the Congress Party, has been moving heaven and earth to get Lajpat Rai elected for the President.' Today Lajpat Rai and tomorrow Tilak! Where will be the Congress be"?[21] Thus, the presidential issue was the first principal point of difference between the two wings of the Congress. The demand of constitution for the Congress was another point of controversy. It was vehemently opposed by the Moderates. Finally, Boycott, Swadeshism, National education and self-government on colonial lines were the burning issues for the forthcoming Congress. The Extremists had returned from the Benaras Congress in an unhappy mood. They came to Calcutta to carry out these resolutions.

Sir William Wedderburn was much upset at this unfortunate situation and made efforts to avert such an eventuality. On August 23, 1906 in a letter to Lajpat, Sir William Wedderburn urged him to help the Congress in the hour of its crisis. He wrote to him to use influence in order to keep the Congress "on its present lines, at any rate until Mr. Morley has had time to get his feet on firm ground".[22] Lala Lajpat Rai was keen to maintain "the unity and solidarity" of the Congress, but he was not confident of the ultimate results because, in his opinion, Bengal was in a "great ferment" and "new" ideas were replacing "old" ones.[23] He, however, assured Wedderburn that he would act up to his wishes and would do his best to avert the split.[24] Gokhale too had special regard for and confidence in Lajpat Rai. He said that as a public worker Lajpat Rai was more selfless than either Tilak or Pal and, though his name was freely used by Bipin Chandra Pal and his party, he was not with them in their views or methods and he perhaps would have been more actively "on our side today if greater tact had been displayed in the past in meeting the wishes of men like him".[25] It was a very accurate assessment of Lajpat Rai's views and ideology.

The Moderates stunned by the activities of the Extremists decided to have Dadabhai Naoroji as the President for the 1906 session knowing fully well that the Extremists would not oppose openly the election of the "Grand Old Man" of India.[26] Surendranath Banerjee wrote to Dadabhai Naoroji on October 25, 1906:

> Those who were convassing for Tilak have given us the assurance that they will unanimously join in electing you as President and have authorised me to communicate the fact to you... You have saved us from a great crisis.[27]

Naoroji accepted the offer. Welcoming the election, Lajpat Rai wrote: "Mr. Naoroji's formal election as President will stop all irritation and all quarrels about the President".[28] Thus, a great crisis in the Congress was averted.

Lajpat Rai arrived at Calcutta on December 26, 1906 to attend the session of the Indian National Congress. The Congress met on December 27.[29] The address of the President was a plea for moderation and constitutional agitation, and the aim of the Congress was stated in clear terms - "self-Government or Swaraj like that of the United Kingdom or the colonies".[30] Naoroji demanded it as the birth right of Indians as British citizen.

The resolution on the partition of Bengal was discussed on December 27. In this resolution the Congress recorded its "emphatic protest against the partition of Bengal", and regretted that it was "wholly and decisively against the wishes of the majority of the people of Bengal".[31] It also asked for an inquiry by the Government over the partition issue. The Extremist argued that the time had come to give up idea of petitioning the government for enquiries and they moved an amendment that the clause be struck out. Dadabhai Naoroji thought that the feeling of the House was not in favour of the amendment but wisely refused to put it to a vote.[32] In the end the Moderates decided to accept the amendment, and speaking in the session Surendra Nath Banerjee said that "all reference to the commission of inquiry will be deleted" from the final wording of the resolution.[33]

The real conflict came on the wording of the Boycott and Swadeshi resolutions. At the 1905 Congress, the Congress leaders had accepted that the boycott of foreign goods was a legitimate technique for use in Bengal. The Extremists now attempted to widen the concept by arguing that boycott be applied to every British .thing and in every province. When the Moderates insisted on limiting the endorsement of boycott to only Bengal, Bipin Chandra Pal demanded Congress recommendation of universal economic and political boycott. Pal's demand was rejected by the Moderates. Intervening in the controversy Lajpat Rai supported the boycott resolution and described it as the religion of new India; the manifestation of self-sacrificing patriotism; the means of moulding a self-reliant Indian Nation and the spearhead of India's national struggle against British rule.[34] Lajpat Rai attempted to solve the controversy by introducing an amendment. "To me", Lajpat Rai writes, "it appeared that the difference in the attitude of the two groups was one of the word only. So I moved an amendment which though not accepted by the Extremist leaders was carried by majority. Bipin Chandra Pal and his party walked out. The leader of the moderates, Gokhale, was pleased with me and said I had solved the situation".[35] Thus, drafted resolution in committee read: "Having regard to the fact that the people of this country have little or no voice in its administration and that their representations to the Government do not receive due consideration, that the Boycott movement inaugurated in Bengal by way of protest against the partition of that province, was and is legitimate".[36] It seems Lajpat Rai had the spirit of an extremist but he was not a blind follower of any school of thought. He was more interested in preserving harmony in the national organisation.

The resolution on Swadeshi also evoked fierce controversy. Lajpat Rai again endeavoured to reconcile the two warring groups. He brought about a temporary compromise by inserting the words "even at some sacrifice". The resolution read thus: "This Congress accord its most cordial support to the Swadeshi movement and calls upon the people of the country to labour for its success by making earnest and sustained efforts to promote the growth of indigenous industries and to stimulate the production of indigenous articles by giving them preference over imported commodities even at some sacrifice".[37] Lajpat Rai declared:

> The first thing which Swadeshism reminds you of constantly is that in the use of articles, in the use of the necessaries of life you have a duty to perform towards your country and that duty can best be performed by the consumption of Indian-make articles in preference to foreign commodities. One thing which this resolution calls upon you to do is to encourage the production of all home-made articles.[38]

Lajpat Rai described Swadeshism as a right step towards self-reliance. He asked his countrymen to invest their capital in setting up industries. This, he said, would be a great service to the country.[39]

At Calcutta, Lajpat Rai acted as peace-maker to maintain unity within the Congress. It was at least partly due to his efforts that Congress was saved from an open rupture for another year. Here he exercised his skill and influence in bringing about workable compromise between the Moderates and the Extremists.

On his return to Punjab after Calcutta Congress, Lajpat Rai made extensive tours and actively engaged himself in educating public opinion about the political situation and the Swadeshi resolution. On January 13 and 14, 1907, in his address at Sialkot, Lajpat Rai urged his 4,000 audiences to assist the Swadeshi movement by boycotting all foreign goods, in particular foreign sugar.[40]

At Lyallpur on March 21 and 22, 1907, Lajpat Rai expressed satisfaction on the unity of the Hindus and Muslims: "Our whole strength lies in standing side by side and remaining united... take this vow of Union on your Koran and Shastras and no power on earth can humiliate you".[41] Expressing the importance of unity among all classes he said: "When we become united in the interests of the country, no force in the world will be able to separate us from each other".[42]

On March 26, 1907, Lajpat Rai visited Allahabad and delivered lectures on "The new spirit". He drew attention to the then existing political situation and the means to be adopted to improve it. In his second address he advised the people to boycott British courts and start Panchayats for the adjudication of disputes.[43]

The Punjab, Lajpat Rai's home province, which had been relatively quiet during Curzon's regime was in ferment during 1906-07; a 'new air' was blowing in men's mind. The circumstances leading to Lajpat Rai's deportation will be discussed in another chapter. Here it is sufficient to say that this unrest was due to several causes. A series of unjust administrative and legislative measures of the local Government were responsible for this state of affairs. Significant among these were the Colonization Bill, increase of irrigation rates in the Bari Doab Canal Colony and the abnormal increase of land revenue in Rawalpindi district. With the rising unrest the bureaucracy was taken by panic as the year marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Sepoy's uprising at Meerut and they had terrible apprehensions of evil days. They blamed the politicians for the unrest, quite oblivious of the genuine grievances of the people. In this tense situation the Punjab Government wanted to make an impressive show of force, and they struck at Lajpat Rai, the most popular leader of the province, and Sardar Ajit Singh, the well-known extremist leader. He was arrested on May 9, 1907, and was quietly deported to Mandalay under Regulation III of 1818. Ajit Singh followed him there a few days later. The Extremists as well as the Moderates joined in protest against the deportation. The Viceroy also felt that Lajpat Rai's deportation was hasty and unjust. He and Ajit Singh were restored to freedom six months after their arrest. Lajpat Rai returned home on November 19, 1907.

During the period Lajpat Rai was in Mandalay the struggle between the two wings of Congress had taken a new turn. Both parties were endeavouring to seize the organisation and run it on their own lines alone. They were making attempts to demonstrate their strength at the next Congress to be held at Surat. Later on the venue was shifted to Surat at the instance of the Moderates. Gokhale, in a private letter, himself accepted that "this year's crisis is the gravest without doubt". He realised that "it will be impossible to avoid a split this year".[44]

By the time of his release, Lajpat Rai had gained enormous popularity, both in public and in the Congress, and the Extremists wanted to put his name for the Presidency of the national Congress. According to the existing convention the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the previous session was usually voted to the chair. But the Extremists resented the nomination of Dr. Rash Behari Ghose, owing to his moderate sympathies. There was also a rumour that the four militant resolutions of the Calcutta Congress were not to be taken up for consideration. Thirdly, a Swadeshi Exhibition was about to be held after the Congress session. There was a proposal to invite an European to open the Exhibition. The Extremists who could not bear the "idea of a European opening" such an exhibition resented this move. Their stand was that "a Swadeshi Exhibition should be opened by a Swadeshi man" B.S.Moonje, an Extremist, in his letter to G.M. Chitnavis, wrote: "We will not allow under any circumstances a European to open our exhibition. If our leaders will not respect our sentiment, they must be prepared to face all opposition".[45]

Meanwhile, Lajpat Rai was released.[46] This news, though welcome in every respect, tended to make the Congress "confusion worse confounded". At once, as if by instinct, the cry went round that Lajpat Rai was the fittest man to preside over the annual Congress. At Surat on November 21, 1907 the Reception Committee was formed and the office bearers of the Congress were appointed. The Presidential election was to take place on November 24, 1907. The young Nationalists of Surat and adjoining places stoutly suggested the name of Lajpat Rai for the Presidential post.[47] Gokhale opposed this proposal. He argued, "coaxed, appealed; and when every device proved unavailing, he removed the velvet glove from off his mailed fist, and challenged the young nationalists to secure Lajpat Rai's election in the face of the packed majority of the Moderates".[48]

Later on, after the Surat split Gokhale gave three reasons for not considering the candidature of Lajpat Rai: "First, that, with only a month at the disposal of the Reception Committee, for making arrangements which, in other places, had taken at least three to four months, any division among the workers at Surat was most undesirable as it was sure to hamper the progress of their carrying their proposal about Lajpat Rai, their strength being only five or six out of about two hundred who were expected to attend that afternoon meeting, and that the rejection of Mr. Lajpat Rai's name would only be a painful and wanton humiliation for him, and thirdly and lastly, that though Lajpat Rai had been personally restored to freedom, the larger question of the principle involved in his deportation had yet to be fought out, and it would best be fought out by keeping up the feeling of the country united and intact behind him, and that this feeling was sure to be divided if one section of the Congress tried to run him as a party candidate... The Congress must, of course, express condemnation of Government measures when necessary, but it had other important work to do. We can not do without the help and cooperation of Government in many matters at our present stage".[49] But the Extremist section did not agree with Gokhale's point of view.

In the beginning Lajpat Rai did not comment when his name was first mentioned for Presidentship of the National Congress. He did not even give reply to his supporters' letters.[50] When the Moderates changed the venue of the Congress from Nagpur to Surat, the Extremists approached Lajpat Rai to preside over a separate national Congress at Nagpur. But Lajpat Rai did not want any split within the Congress. He opposed their proposal of holding a separate National Congress. He replied that Punjab sentiment was firmly opposed to the idea.[51] On November 3, 1907, Lajpat Rai broke his silence and deplored the controversy on the presidential issue. He decided to keep himself aloof from the Congress controversy. He requested all his friends "to desist from mentioning my name in connection therewith", and he appealed to them to "accept the nomination of the Reception Committee in a spirit of loyalty and love".[52] He wanted peace within the Congress. So he assured Gokhale that the

Committee's action regarding the presidentship had his full support, and he added, "I am prepared to heartily cooperate with you in your noble efforts to preserve harmony in the national ranks, but I am afraid my voice is not likely to prove more effectual than yours". "However", he further said, "I shall do my best and I hope that our efforts might at any rate reduce the number of irreconciables".[53] He had received a number of letters and telegrams to accept the presidency if "it was formally made"[54] to him. But Lajpat Rai was not ready to consider any such proposal unless he was sure that "it had the unanimous consent not only of the Reception Committee, but of the leaders as well".[55]

At Reception Committee's meeting on November 23, 1907, Gokhale tried to win over the younger elements by telling them that since he was going to pass a resolution of protest against the arrest and deportation of Lajpat Rai, he should not occupy the Chair. Gokhale is reported to have said, "How can we snap our fingers at Government? Surely we can not flout the Government at this stage. The authorities will throttle our movement in no time".[56] The Extremists, on the contrary, were keen to secure Lajpat Rai for the Presidency. They would not allow the hero of the hour to be humiliated by "unworthy" steps of the Moderates. The younger elements replied that by electing him to the Presidential Chair a hundred times stronger protest against his deportation would thus be made. But Gokhale and other Moderate leaders would not hear of Lajpat Rai's name. The Extremists, therefore, left the meeting in disgust and Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh was then "unanimously elected" President by the votes of those who remained at the meeting. But in the Kesari, December 10, 1907, Tilak insisted that Lajpat Rai must become the President of the Surat Congress:

> If it was a question of honouring a patriot, Lala Lajpat Rai had made tremendous sacrifices and suffered for the country and there could be no comparison between him and Rash Behari Ghosh. We do not say that Gokhale worked against Lajpat rai out of personal malice or hatred but his activity was calculated to commit the Congress to harmful beliefs... If you want to honour to Lalaji,

> elect him President of the Congress. If you cannot do it, keep quiet. Who are you merely to invite Lajpat Rai to the Surat Congress? He can come there in his own right as a delegate. Why he should be your quest?[57]

On the eve of the Surat session, Aurobindo Ghosh called upon Extremists to counter the "Bombay loyalists" and set up a separate Nationalist Conference. Consequently, the first Indian Nationalist Conference was held at Haripur on the out-skirts of Surat on December 23, 1907. It was presided over by Aurobindo and addressed by Tilak. Entrance to the Nationalists' Conference was conditional upon a personal declaration of being a 'Nationalist', and the conference went on to pass resolutions on total boycott and independence.[58] Although, the Extremists' Nationalist Conference presented a consolidated front, it contained two distinct groups: one led by Tilak who repudiated any intention to cause a split in the Congress, the other led by Aurobindo who sought to capture the Congress or wreck it.[59]

In such a confused situation, Lajpat Rai arrived at Surat on the morning of December 25th, 1907. He was keen to bring about unity in the two Congress groups. Apart from the sharp controversy regarding the election of the President, the Extremists also feared that the Moderates intended to tone down the four resolutions passed in the Calcutta Congress viz., Swadeshi, Swarajya, Boycott and National Education.[60] He saw, on the say of his arrival, Tilak and Khaparde in the afternoon and intimated to them his intension of arranging a meeting of a few leading delegates from each side to settle the various questions in dispute. They agreed and Lajpat Rai went to Gokhale to arrange for the meeting. Tilak and Khaparde returned to the Nationalist Conference which was being held that evening. At this Conference a Nationalist Committee consisting of one Nationalist delegate from each province was appointed to carry on the negotiations with the other side; and it was decided if the Nationalist Committee failed to obtain any assurance from the responsible Congress officials about status quo being maintained, the Nationalists should begin their opposition from the election of the President.

After this Lajpat Rai went to see Gokhale and appraised him of the situation. But Gokhale did not favour Lajpat Rai's idea of a meeting of a few representatives of the two camps to sort out the disputed points. Gokhale's reaction speaks for itself:

> Lajpat Rai had a brief talk with me. It was on the 25th December, in the evening, at the Railway Station when he had gone there to receive the President, about a proposal made by Mr. Tilak that five men on his side and five men on the other should meet together and settle the wording of the resolutions. I pointed out to Mr. Lajpat Rai that it was the business of the Subject Committee to settle the wording and a Committee such as Mr. Tilak suggested had never been appointed before. Moreover, it was easy for Mr. Tilak, whose followers were meeting in a Conference day after day, to nominate five men to represent his side. But amidst the excitement and bitterness of feeling then prevailing, what five men, I asked, could claim the authority or undertake the responsibility to act in the name of the other delegates and I said to him, "let the Subject Committee meet tomorrow and let us see if any differences remain to be adjusted. And, if any remain, you can make this proposal to the subject Committee. Lajpat saw the force of this and did not press the suggestion further.[61]

In the face of this situation Lajpat Rai realised that compromise was not possible. He was unhappy and sad. He did not make any further effort. When no intimation was received from Lajpat Rai on the night of the 25th, or the morning of the 26th December regarding the proposal of a joint Committee for reconciliation proposed by him, nor a copy of the draft resolutions supplied to Tilak or any other delegates to enable them to judge if sliding back from the old position was really intended, then the Extremists decided to oppose the Presidential election.[62]

In the meantime, Tilak and Khaparde met Surendranath Banerjee and told him that they would withdraw all opposition if the Nationalist Party was assured that its status at the session would not be attacked and if, when the resolution on the election of the President was discussed, some graceful reference was made to the public's desire to have Lajpat Rai in the Chair. This condition Bannerjee accepted as he himself was to speak on the resolution formally proposing the President, but he could give no assurance as to the first condition.[63] Thus, not much came out of a last minute attempt for compromise.

On the morning of December 26, the twenty-third session of the Congress met at Surat. The impending split could be anticipated on the first day, when Bannerjee formally introduced the President-elect, Rash Behari Ghosh. Tumultous hisses and shouts interrupted Bannerjee's speech, and the general meeting had to be suspended. On the following day, Khaparde describes the events thus:

> When the Congress sitting commenced again Surendra Babu resumed his speech and was patiently heard. Then Tilak who had given notice of amendment got up to the platform to move it. The Chairman ruled it out of the order. Tilak wished to appeal to the delegates. This the Chairman and the Moderates would not allow. A Moderate, I think, Ambalal threw a chair at Tilak. This enraged all our party. A shoe throw by a Moderate at Tilak struck Surendra Babu on the back and Sir P.M.Mehta on the cheek. There arose a tremendous uproar and many youngmen got up on the platform. There was a free fight. Dr. Gadre got hurt. Bhagat, Dr. Moonje, Mr. Thengadi and a number of others protected Tilak and brought him out safe. I also came out and we sat in C.P. (Central Provinces) Tent. The Police took possession of the Pandal. The Moderates brought the storm on themselves and some of them were roughly handled .[64]

Although Tilak's objection to the election of the President sparked off the uproar, he was by no means responsible for the split in the Congress. He regretted the outbreak and believed that it was "accidental and unexpected".[65] In a letter to his father, Jawaharlal Nehru who was studying in England rightly commented about the Surat split: "You will most probably throw all the blame on Tilak and the Extremists. They may have been to blame for it, but the Moderates had certainly a lot to do with it. I do not at all object R.B.Ghose being president, but the manner in which he was declared president in the face of opposition can hardly be defended from any point of view".[66] The following admission of Aurobindo is revealing, "very few people know that it was I, (without consulting Tilak), who gave the order that led to the breaking of the Congress".[67]

The split was the first unfortunate development in the history of the Indian National Congress. The ideological crisis which was brewing slowly became evident and wide. In fact the split was inevitable. All efforts of Lajpat Rai to maintain unity were of no avail.

After the dissolution of the Congress, the Moderates announced their decision to hold a Convention of the Moderate Party. In an attempt to forestall the convention, Tilak approached Bannerjee with a compromise suggestion. He proposed to waive his opposition to Rash Behari Ghosh's election provided the resolutions on Swadeshi, Boycott and National Education retained their 1906 formulation. In return, Bannerjee stipulated to Tilak the following unconditional public apology: "I and my party beg to withdraw in the best interests of the Congress our opposition to Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh's presidency and regret the incident that took place".[68] Tilak concurred, provided that Bannerjee agreed to walk out from the Congress in the event that the resolutions were carried in their milder form. Bannerjee refused and the negotiations broke down.[69]

Lajpat rai implored the Moderates not to oust the Extremists and thereby expose them to Government persecution. In a last minute attempt, he tried to persuade Gokhale to postpone the meeting of the convention. Gokhale himself admitted that Lajpat Rai made many secret attempts 'for reunion'.[70] But nothing came out of these attempts and the convention met on December 28, 1907 at the Congress pavillion. Rash Behari presided and a Committee for drafting the

Constitution of the Congress was formed.

The Punjab delegates were unhappy at the Surat incident. They wanted to remain aloof from both the groups of the Congress. They requested their leader, Lajpat Rai, not to take part in any convention or conference. Lajpat Rai informed Krishnaswamy Iyiar, a Congress leader, that:

> As the majority of the Punjab delegates have for the present decided not to take part in any convention called by either parts.. you will kindly remove my name (Lajpat Rai) from the list of those who had agreed to call a convention.
>
> Lajpat Rai [71]

But Lajpat Rai individually decided to attend the convention of the Moderates because its aim was the attainment of self-government for India similar to that enjoyed by self-governing members of the British Empire through constitutional means. Again it shows that it is unjust to tag him with the Extremists.

Nine hundred delegates including Lajpat Rai attended the Moderates' Convention which passed the following resolution:

> The attainment by India of self-Government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing members of the British Empire and participation by her in the rights and responsibilities of the Empire on equal terms with those Members is the goal of our political aspirations.
>
> The advance towards this goal is to be by strictly Constitutional means by bringing about a steady reform of existing system of administration and by promoting national unity, fostering public spirit, and inproving the condition of the mass of the people. And that all meetings held for the promotion of the aims and objects above indicated have to be conducted in an orderly manner with due submission to the authority of those that are entrusted with the power to control their procedure.[72]

On the other hand, on December 28, three hundred Extremists met under the presidentship of Aurobindo

Ghose and reiterated the 1906 resolution on Swadeshi, Bopycott, National Education and self-government.

Here Tilak explained his position in the Surat Congress thus:

> The reception Committee brushed aside the claim of Lala Lajpat Rai for the Presidentship on the ground that his election would offend the government which would throttle the Congress in no time. That was the beginning of the end of the Congress... This was considered to be the wrong step by the Nationalists. This matter could have been settled on the principle of give and take which characterised the working of the Congress. The Bombay Moderates were determined not to make further compromise with the Nationalists. The Nationalists approached them privately and publicly but were kept at arm's length... It was the spirit of intolerance that had led to the present situation... The Nationalists had not met there (at Surat) for the purpose of creating an organisation which would only advance to the limit upto which the government would allow it to advance but for creating an organisation which would have a life of its own, a life that would enable it to grow under the most distressing and discouraging circumstances, under the most chilling atmosphere of repression...[73]

The Extremists' meeting appointed a Committee to outline future plans. However, it did not issue precise directions, and it never met again.

Lajpat Rai made another conciliatory attempt on December 30, 1907, when the All India Swadeshi Conference met at Surat. The Chairman was Lajpat Rai and he made a forceful and Independent speech. In the first place he stated that the Indians realised themselves as one people with a common tradition and common faith. He warned the gathering that their enemies were trying to disunite the people, that the latest move was to play off the Moderates and the Extremists against each other. He implored the Moderates not to play into the hands of the common foe. He said that it was not wisdom to give the

Extremists to the "persecution of government" officials. He also appealed to the Extremists "not to be impatient of the slowness of age and the voice of practical experience".[74] As a matter of fact, he made it clear to both wings that "we ought to prove to the foreigner that against them we are all one whatever may be our differences".[75]

In 1908, Lajpat Rai again made several unsuccessful conciliatory attempts. On January 13, he visited Calcutta with the object of smoothing away the differences between the Extremists and the Moderates. He also met Motilal Ghosh of the Amrit Bazar Patrika.[76] Lajpat Rai himself writes in this regard thus: "In 1908 at the request of Lokmanya Tilak I made several attempts to bridge up the gulf that had been created between his party and Moderates by the events of Surat but without success".[77] Gokhale was also anxious for unity. "Lajpat Rai and the whole Punjab contingent will work actively for reunion".[78] As a man with a pragmatic approach to Indian politics he wanted the two groups to work within the one National organisation.

The Punjab had two views on the question of participation in the Moderates' Convention of April 1908 which was to adopt a constitution and rules of procedure for the Congress. Some Congressmen wanted to keep the Punjab neutral from the two groups of the Congress. The other group, led by Harkishan Lal, was in favour of attending the Moderates' convention. Lajpat Rai had sympathy with the later. Firstly, he wanted to lessen the gulf between the two groups. Secondly, he was in favour of Congress Constitution which was to be adopted in the convention. Finally, Gokhale was persuading him through private correspondence to attend the convention meeting.[79] On March 13, 1908, Lajpat Rai called a meeting of the Punjab sub-committee to take the final decision on the controversy. This meeting was presided by Lajpat Rai. After a hot discussion, the Committee decided to attend the Moderates' convention at Calcutta. It also adopted a constitution, and selected Lajpat Rai and Harikishan to represent the Punjab in the forthcoming convention.

The Moderates' convention reassembled at Allahabad under the name of the All India Conference on April 18 and 19, 1908. Fifty-five members attended, including Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh, who presided over the conference. Lajpat Rai was appointed a member of a Committee. It drafted a constitution for the Congress.[80] It specified that the object of the Indian national Congress was the attainment of self-government within the British Empire, to be achieved strictly by constitutional means and by gradual reform of the existing system of administration.[81] Every delegate to the Congress had to express in writing his acceptance of this article of faith of the Congress. In addition, the constitution laid down disciplinary rules which ensured the exclusion of rebellious members from the Congress.

On the other hand, the Extremists held their private meeting on October 10th and 11th, 1908 in Bombay under Dr. Balakrishna Shivaram Moonje of Nagpur. Lajpat Rai did not attend this meeting. The Extremists passed a resolution:

> That this meeting of the Nationalists considers it inadvisable to accept the "creed" required to be signed by th4e Allahabad Convention Committee, whose proceedings they consider were illegal, unconstitutional and arbitrary.
>
> That this meeting of the Nationalist considers it advisable to authorise the "Congress Continuation Committee" to organise the next session of the Congress on the lines hitherto followed...
>
> That a deputation of "four" should proceed to Calcutta to confer with the extremist leaders regarding the advisability of continuing the Congress on its present lines, or the inauguration of a Congress on Nationalist lines.[82]

Though Lajpat Rai had attended the Allahabad meeting of the Convention Committee in April 1908 and had signed the new "Creed" of the Congress, he soon drifted from it. His political ideas did not fit in the Congress programme. The extinction of the extreme left wing, Lajpat Rai felt, was a "menace to the Congress". He soon questioned the representative character of the national body under the exclusive control and management of the Moderates.[83] In the Panjabee, Lajpat Rai wrote:

> The Convention had no right or title to make a constitution for the old Indian National Congress. It could only recommend one which, when adopted by the later, even by a majority of votes, would have established its right to continue its old life. Personally I make no secret of the opinion that the principles as settled by the Allahabad Convention are the only principles on which the Congress can run as such, but what I cannot bring myself to accept is the high handed precedent of fastening the constitution on those who had no legal hand in framing it, and too in the name of the old organisation.[84]

Lajpat Rai had another grievance against those Congress leaders who supported the principle of separate denominational representation for the minority community as embodied in the reform scheme of 1909. He was opposed to separate communal electorates and thought, along with many Hindus leaders of the Punjab, that the Congress had acted against Hindu interests, particularly, in the case of his own province where the Hindus were in a minority. For these reasons Lajpat Rai's interest in the Congress waned and he did not attend its annual meetings until 1912.

Again, Lajpat Rai's work in connection with maintaining unity in the Congress was misunderstood by his friends. The Tribune of Lahore published the inconsistencies in his speeches and claimed he was "playing both side".[85] Alfred Nandy, the editor of the Tribune, published letters in the vernacular papers against his role in Surat Congress.[86] Lajpat Rai denied the allegations. He declared that he wanted to patch up the difference by remaining aloof from both groups for the sake of Congress unity. He asked Harkrishan Lal, a local leader, to control Indian Association and the Punjab Congress and he left for England.

Meanwhile, in 1908 Lajpat Rai and his workers worked in various famine affected areas. In the beginning of 1908 the U.P. experienced serious famine. This was probably the third famine in which Lajpat

Rai particularly felt keenly interested. On February 15, 1908, he lectured at Meerut and appealed for subscriptions for famine fund.[87] He wrote an article for the *Panjabee* entitled, *Famine in the United Provinces: A Mission of Enquiry and Relief* in which he advised the Hindus and Muslims to take all of their waifs and orphans and to save them from clutches of Christianity. On March 3rd and 4th, he spoke at Lucknow and on 5th and 6th at Allahabad on famine and education.[88] On this occasion he was accompanied by several volunteers for the distribution of famine relief to whom many instructions had been given. He visited Allahabad, Lucknow, Gonda, Agra, Cownpur, Aligarh, Muthra, Bijnor, Sitapur, Mirzapur, Kheri and other places. He addressed meetings there and collected money for distressed people. He received from all parts of the country nearly Rs.80,000 for his famine Relief Fund.[89] His emissaries visited Jhansi, Hamirpur, Banda, Jhelam, Allahabad, Gonda, Behraich, Kheri, Lucknow, Hardoi, Sitapur, Muthra, Jaunpur and Mirzapur and distributed certain amount of gratuitous relief. The emissaries really played an important role in removing distress of the people of the above mentioned places. They introduced a new spirit of nationalism among masses and a desire to strengthen national revival and lay the foundation of a freedom movement, a movement of Swaraj on constructive lines. There were several youthful enthusiasts who already made themselves conspicuous as social and political workers. One was Sunder Lal of Allahabad and the other Gobardhan Das of Lahore.[90] The former was a very promising student of the Muir College until be began to take interest himself in politics as the result of a visit paid by Lajpat Rai before his deportation to Allahabad and in the end he had to be expelled because of the violence of his speech at political meetings. The latter was one of the chief-leaders of the anti-European riot which took place in Lahore in April, 1907 and was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment which was afterwards reduced on appeal to six months. These two agents brought political consciousness among the masses during their tours in connection with famine work. Another of Lajpat Rai's emissary called Mukandilal, who worked in the Garhwal district, was like Sunder Lal for sometime a student in the Muir College where he used to interest himself in reading revolutionary literature and attending political meetings. When he went to the Garhwal district he was asked by the Deputy Commissioner to work in the ganges Valley where assistance was most required, but instead of this he went off to Sub-Divisional office at Chamoli and tried to convert the clerks there to his political views.[91] Raila Ram and Madan Mohan were the two emissaries of Lajpat Rai who worked in the Allahabad Division. They had made their Headquarters at Jhansi, working under the instructions of Babu Shanker Sahai and Pandit Perag Das, President and Vice-President of the Jhansi Arya Samaj respectively.[92] As regards these two men, enquiries were made in Jhansi by Inspector Nur Ahmad of the Criminal Investigation Department and the report made by him was confirmed by information given to the Collector of Jhansi by Muin-ud-din Ahmad, Naib Tahsildar of Gurotha, who was advised to suppress the information by the Tahsildar Chandulal and the Deputy Collector, Raghunath Prasad. The report was to the effect that though Lajpat Rai's ostensible object was charity, his primary object was to explain to the people in tracts their "rights' against Government, with the eventual aim of establishing a "national Government". A further object of his emissaries was reported to be to convert Mohammedans to Aryas.[93] An official document entitled "Distribution of famine relief in U.P. by Emissaries, sent by Lajpat Rai; History of the doings of Lajpat Rai since his return from deportation" reveals the attitude of Government towards Lajpat Rai during U.P. famine. It said that the Samaj's scheme of distributing famine relief was a political movement both in its inception and in its execution. Lajpat Rai's scheme was mainly a political movement designed in the words of a Zamindar of the Jalaun district "to attract the affection of the people from the Government".[94] This work was not wholly philanthropic but was intended to introduce the seeds of the "national movement" in the rural tracts and to prejudice the people against the efforts of Government.[95]

Numerous reasons compelled Lajpat Rai to leave India. Since his release from deportation, the Government kept eyes on his activities. On May 28,1908 in a letter to Gokhale, Lajpat Rai wrote: "The Police of course never leaves me alone and are after me like a shadow".[96] Again, on August 20, in his letter to Gokhale who was then in England, he wrote, "My life here is a constant misery on account of close espionage kept on me. I feel very much worried and have consequently been suffering from sleeplessness".[97] The repressive policy of the Government, more particularly the deportations of nine Bengal leaders, and the imprisonment of Tilak had up-set him. Then he was getting sick of Lahore life and he thought it was impossible to tolerate "imposters, hypocrities and traitors".[98] Some Arya samaj leaders in Punjab were opposed to participation in active politics on the part of Samaj leaders. They wanted to confine their activities to social reform and spread of education alone. Lajpat Rai, on the contrary, favoured active participation in the political life of the country.[99] The existence of continual controversy in the Congress also led him to avoid nationalist activities in India. He hoped that a short absence might restore the equilibrium of his mind, and enable him to resume his work in a hopeful mood.[100]

Lajpat Rai left India in the last week of August and he arrived in London on September 15, 1908. On his way, he stayed for a week at Egypt where the young Turks had won a grand national achievement. On his arrival at London, he refused to indulge into any political discussion or a statement of his views and he is reported to have said that, "nothing should be said about his visit".[101] According to the secret reports of the Government, "Lajpat Rai kept aloof from the revolutionary party".[102]

During his stay in England in 1908-09, Rai could not keep himself away from the basic principles of the Congress. He started Nationalist activities there. He was present at the National Day celebrations on October 16, 1908 which was presided over by Sir H.H. Bhawanagree. Lajpat Rai moved the first resolution protesting against the position of natives in South Africa. On the same day, he presided a "Bande Mataram" celebration. On this occasion, Lajpat Rai said:-

> Nationalism was reborn in India on October 16, 1905. The partition might remain or be modified but the idea it had given birth to would never die. For them 16th October was a day of love, a day of devotion, a day for worship, a day for sacrifice.[103]

In England, many British politicians had become his friends. Mr.Hart Davies and Parker, Labour M.P.'s for Halifax were his friends. On December 20, 1908, Lajpat Rai was invited by Parker to deliver a lecture at Cardiff. In his speech, he disclosed some unpleasant truths about the British administration of India and he compared his audience in their struggle against the capitalists with the people of India struggling against bureaucracy. Discussing about political developments in India, Lajpat Rai said: "The movement in India is bound to have its influence upon your movement in England. If we aim at the progress of humanity we shall aim at peace and this can only be had where justice and truth prevail. In these circumstances the Indian cause is the cause of humanity, the cause of the Indian masses is the cause of the English masses, the cause of the Indian democracy is the cause of the English democracy, the cause of the English working man is the cause of the Indian working man, and it is in that light that I ask you to study this question and give your opinions when you are asked to give them".[104] He appealed to the Labourities to help the Indian agitation as the success of the latter would deal a blow to the class of capitalists and landlords.[105]

Important British journals like the Manchester Guardian and the Daily News published interviews with Lajpat Rai. Men occupying the highest position in British journalism interviewed him - amongst them Nevinson and Stead. Interviewing him for the Review of Reviews, stead set him a fine task - asking the Indian leader what he would do if he was the British Viceroy in India. Lajpat Rai said, "a strictly provisonal appointment pending other arrangements", and after he had expounded his views in a modest key about the provincial and central legislatures and governments, the interviewer found himself summing these up thus: "In other words, you would use your Viceroyalty for the purpose of digging the grave of the British Government in India".[106] Nevinson, having himself studied the Indian question and the Indian movement on the spot and having formed his own views on these, was more interested in questioning Lajpat Rai about smaller matters - the immediate grievances and so Lajpat Rai had to tell him about the espionage and about the enormity of treating political prisoners like common felons.[107]

Lajpat Rai attended a meeting of the Congress Extremists in London. The meeting was held as a kind of protest to the prohibition of the Congress at Nagpur. Bipin Chandra Pal was also present. G.S.Khaparde was in the chair. The meeting passed a resolution wherein Swaraj was declared to be the goal of the Indian Nationalists. They also expressed their full sympathy and moral support to the Irish, Egyptian and Persian Nationalists struggling for the emancipation of their respective countries.[108]

In England Lajpat Rai endeavoured to further the cause of India through his speeches and meeting the members of Parliament. During his brief visit he met members of the Parliament and delivered lectures in which he referred to the inadequancies of the Indian administration. He also drew their attention to the deplorable condition of Indian in South Africa. He appealed to the Labour Party to support the Indian struggle for emancipation. He returned to Lahore in March 1909.

The twenty-fourth Congress was held under Rash Behari Ghosh at Madras in December 1908. It was a purely Moderates' Congress. The key note of the 1908 Moderates' Congress was its expression of gratitude for the proposed reforms by the Government of India which had been announced two weeks before the Congress convened.[109] The Congress gratitude turned into dissatisfaction when the details framed under the Act were announced at the end of 1909. Harkishan Lal led the Punjab delegates at this session. He invited the 1909 Congress to Lahore.[110] But on his return to Lahore he could not find members for a Reception

Committee.[111] Even Punjab Provincial Congress Committee did not give much response at its annual meeting. He realised that had he known that there was so much reluctance in the Punjab to join the Congress on the part of those who had hitherto taken an active part in all kinds of political agitation, he would not have invited the Congress to the Punjab. He admitted that the majority of the political leaders in the Punjab were opposed to joining the Congress.[112] Lajpat Rai wanted to remain away for some time from the Congress. He struck to his original intention of not returning to Lahore till April 1909.[113] In the absence of Lajpat Rai the Punjab Congress was devoid of leadership and it remained inactive. It was officially accepted that, "the Congress preparations would remain practically at a standstill till his return".[114]

The reforms, which were embodied in the Indian Councils Act of 1909, enlarged the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils; conceeded non-official majorities in the provinces while retaining the official majority in the centre; and allowed members of the Councils to move resolutions and ask supplementary questions. Above all, the reforms recognised the principle of election to the enlarged Legislative Councils, though not through constituencies but through the expanded representation of municipal and district boards, universities, chamber of commerce, landholders Association; and, most important, they gave the Muslims separate electorate.

The 1909 Congress condemned the separate electorates for the Muslims as designed to aggravate communal differences. It considered the franchise to be illiberal and rooted in the distrust of the educated classes. It regretted that the non-official majorities in the provincial legislative councils had been rendered ineffective by the system of nomination. But the Congress gratefully accepted the Act of 1909 as a "fairly liberal measure".[115]

Lajpat Rai, who was in England in 1909, considered the reform scheme as the most mischievous one that could be conceived in the present condition of India for it permanently divided the country into two hostile camps - Hindu and Mohammadan. He did not complain of the preference shown to the Mohammadans but he condemned the principle which divided the country into two hostile groups. Then again the franchise had been unevently distributed, some people had three votes and other none.[116] Lajpat Rai also condemned the executive authority of the Government to prohibit certain individuals from contesting elections. He felt that there was no use of such reform when the present system of Government of India was polluting the manhood of the country and making patriotism and public spirit a crime.[117] He said that India has hoped much from the Liberal Party, that the policy of repression had thrown representative; and even so the officials have exerted themselves to reduce their share in the deliberations to a farce".[118] He felt that independent criticism of Government action had been stifled.

However, on his return to India in March 1909 he found the old factions and controversies in the national Congress and his province. The Punjab was the host of forthcoming annual session of the Congress. The leaders at Lahore were more than usually excited about this session. One group led by harkishan Lal was pushing on the Reception Committee arrangements, another did not want a Congress at all - not in the Punjab any way. Muslim too did not favour Lahore as the venue.

The Morley Minto Reforms and the Moderates' acceptance of the principle of separate communal electorates annoyed him. Lajpat Rai believed that the Congress was overlooking the Hindu interests. His own province, Punjab where the Hindus were in a minority, had good reason to feel unhappy about these Reform measures which were to give undue representation to the Muslims in the legislative council.[119] As mentioned earlier he was opposed to the policy of separate electorates, though he was cautious in his criticism as he did not wish to bring the process of reforms to a halt.[120] About the promise of separate electorates to Muslims, he wrote:

> That the present reforms are not based on the democratic ideal of the West may be true; but the reason for the enthusiastic reception in India

> is that they are believed to be a step towards an actual democratic form of government, with no distinction of Hindu, Mohammedan, Parsi and the rest. That is the goal of the Hindu politician: he does not seek a Hindu majority crushing Mohammedan or other minorities. Aiming them to obliterate all religious distinctions for national political purposes, he objects to communal representation or communal voting which would accentuate those distinctions.[121]

About the development in the Congress and Lahore session he expressed his views in a letter to Jaswant Rai published in the *Panjabee* on July 15, 1909. He also wrote very frankly about the Surat split and its sequel. In his opinion, "the Moderates and Nationalists are committing an error of tactics in making the split a settled fact". "In the interest of the Country", he felt, "the party called moderate should retain the actual control and management of the Congress but that the other party should remain inside the Congress, and should exercise its influence in the way in which all strong minorities do". He even suggested that the annual meetings of the Congress should be suspended for sometime. About the Lahore Congress he said, "I am strongly of opinion that the efforts to hold the next session of the Congress at Lahore in *defiance of the best Hindu opinion of the province are unwise* and not in the best interests of the country, the province and the Congress".[122]

The Congress authorities did not accept Lajpat Rai's advise. The annual meetings were not abandoned and the delegates duly assembled in the last week of December in Lahore. Despite various difficulties Harkishan Lal's group ran the show; the Arya Samaj leaders mostly kept away from it. Lajpat Rai and Harkishan Lal drifted further apart. Under Alfred Nundy's editorship *The Tribune* became more and more hostile to Lajpat Rai and his friends. And this paper was supposed to be controlled by Harkishan Lal, as the most effective amongst its trustees.[123] Some time before the Congress session there were rumours that the President-designate, Pherozshah Mehta, would decline to preside. Six days before the session the rumour became a definite fact and his place had to be taken by Madan Mohan Malaviya. Lajpat Rai kept away from the Congress session. In fact, he kept away from Lahore while the Congress met.

Towards the end of 1909, Bhai Parmanand's house was raided by the police and proceedings started against him in a court of law, resulting later on in his being bound over for good behaviour. In the search the police took away a number of decuments, and among them two letters from Lajpat Rai. These were later produced in the court and the writer of the letters himself examined regarding them. In the first dated february 28, 1907, Lajpat Rai requested the recipient to ask Shyamji Krishna Verma to "employ little of his money in sending out a number of books containing true ideas on politics to the student community here. He also asked Parmanand to sound Krishna Verma as to the placing "at our disposal of a portion of his gift of Rs.10,000 for political missionaries". In the second letter dated April 11, 1907, Lajpat Rai had written about the unrest among the agricultural classes in the Punjab.

When the case against Parmanand came up in the court, Lajpat Rai stated that by the above expression he meant nothing more than that 'agriculturists, not being accustomed to a political agitation, might not be able to carry on their agitation peacefully'. He further said that the books which he asked for were of the description mentioned in another letter produced that day and containing a list of standard publications, including revolutionary political or historical novels. He added the words: "Till after my return from deportation, I never knew that Shyamji Krishna Verma had views about political violence or crime such as are now expressed by him. After that I had nothing to do with him".[124] In fact Lajpat Rai was close to Shyamji Krishna Verma during his next visit to England in 1910. They were also close to each other through private correspondence.

The above mentioned episode had certain important consequences for Lajpat Rai. After the police raid at Bhai Parmanand's house and the inclusion of the letters in the "recovery" list, Lajpat Rai's friends asked him to be ready for a like raid at his place. They insisted on being given a free hand, and removed whatever part of his papers and books they thought unsafe - and, without even consulting or informing him, destroyed them too! Among the file of letters, journals, papers, manuscripts that fed the flames was an autobiographical novel in Urdu which he had started writing at Mandalay.[125]

A more important consequence of the proceedings against Bhai Parmanand was the demoralising effect on the leaders of the Punjab. "Those who are not with us are against us", was the peculiar doctrine then enunciated and the D.A.V.College authorities who succumbed to its pernicious implications dismissed Bhai Parmanand who had dedicated his life to the service of the college and had rendered service of rare merit to the Samaj- even without waiting for the verdict of the court.[126]

Another results of above episode was the strict police surveillance of Lajpat Rai in Lahore. He even was not in position to supply copies of the books to Ramsay Macdonald, M.P. which the police had captured. Macdonald, in his letter to Lajpat Rai on November 11, 1909, had expressed desire to know the nature of the books captured by the Lahore police. Lajpat Rai replied on November 16:

> I am afraid I cannot supply you with copies of the books captured, as all the copies have been taken possession of by the police... It seems that we are on the eve of evil times again.[127]

Soon Lajpat Rai had to leave his country on account of the precarious condition of his son.[128] He left Bombay on March 17, 1910 for London. In England, Lajpat Rai worked for the release of Tilak and other political prisoners. According to the Government report he himself was interested in securing the assistance of the Radical and social reform parties at home in obtaining the release of Tilak and other Congress leaders as an act of grace on the occasion of new King Emperor's accession. He even suggested to some of his Lahore friends the necessity of submitting a memorial on the subject, but the suggestion was not accepted. In this connection, his letter appeared in the Daily News, on 9th May, 1910 entitled, "Lord Morley's opportunity - a suggestion by Lajpat Rai":

> The installation of the New King, however, is Lord Morley's opportunity to make the Crown even more popular in India. Orientals always connect kingship with unbounded mercy and unsurpassable generosity. It is customary for kings to signalise their accession to the throne by acts of clemency. Let the reign of George V herald an era of peace and good-will towards India. There can be no better way of appealing to the imagination of the Indian people than by giving freedom to men like Tilak and Aurobindo Ghosh and others who are suffering for their political opinions. This is the right moment for a general amnesty for all political offences committed in the past, accompanied by a suspension, if not a total repeal of the gagging Acts passed during the last four years. Let us start with a clean slate.[129]

Lajpat Rai was the first Congress leader who attended the Conference on the defence of Nationalities and Subject races held at Caxton Hall on 28th, 29th and 30th June, 1910 under the auspices of the International Committee formed in 1907. Professor Gilbert Murray in his inaugural address made a reference to Lajpat Rai, "I believe that India has given of her best to movements of the sort in which Mr. Lajpat Rai is a leader. I may mention that a high official who approved of Mr. Lajpat Rai's deportation told me that there were few men in India for whom he had greater respect".

India's representatives to this conference (besides Lajpat Rai) were Bipin Chandra Pal, Dube and Sir Henry Cotton. The Indian-Egypt-Morocco sitting was presided over by Frederick Mackarness and the main Indian contribution was Lajpat Rai's speech on "The Present Condition of India". In the course of his speech Lajpat Rai said that imperialism in his country meant the suppression of all public spirit through the ban of free speech and the imprisonment of those whom the Government considered to be agitators. Lord

Morley's good intentions had been frustrated by the limitations laid upon them by the Indian Government and by the series of repressive decrees that now stifled the liberty of the Press, prevented public meeting, allowed trial without jury, and by the corruption and cruelty of the Police.[130] Lajpat Rai further said that these measures, by driving the National spirit under ground, could only result in terrorism quite foreign to the nature of the people. Such suppression had deprived the reforms of all their graces and had bitterly disappointed the high hopes with which the accession of the Liberal Party to power in 1906 had created among true Indian patriots.[131]

And he showed up the hollowness of Morley's reforms, viz., the addition of an Indian to the three Executive Councils of Bengal, Bombay and Madras, and one to the Viceroy's Council. And about Minto's contribution of communal representation he said: "The division of the country into two different camps, Muslim and non-Muslim, under the highest sanction, has not only taken the grace from the reform scheme, but rendered it the most mischievous scheme ever propounded to perpetuate religious rivalries for political purposes in a country aspiring to be united.[132] He showed up the sham "democracy" of the Morley Act in working when he told his audience that a person like Surendranath Banerjee was ineligible for the local council of his province. He also said that the property qualification of the Act would make men like Gokhale and Dadabhai Naoroji ineligible for election to the Provincial Councils.[133] In his own province, the Punjab, he said "The Council consists of 14 non-official members as against 11 officials; out of these 14, only 5 are elected. Then the beauty of the whole thing is that while the work of the Council is done in English, several of the nominated members are quite innocent of a knowledge of the language".[134]

Mrs. N.F.Dryhurst, the Irish translator of some of Kropotkin's works into English and the enthusiastic General Secretary of the International Committee that had convened the Conference, had her curiosity aroused by the eulogistic tributes paid by Gilbert Murray and Frederick Mackarness to Lajpat Rai and the

Egyptian Farid Beg. "I was naturally very curious", says Mrs. Dryhurst, "to see and hear both the Egyptian and Hindu leaders both of whom became my personal friends. Farid Beg spoke in French and was in appearance western European, but Lajpat Rai brought the far east vividly before us. Slight in stature but extremely dignified, his well-cut features expressing that untarnishable pride which comes only through a generous and pure nature, wearing the picturesque head dress of his native state he held the vast audience for nearly an hour with a flow of clear and beautiful English.[135]

Lajpat Rai returned on September 21, 1910 to India. During his brief stay abroad he made use of every opportunity to further India's cause.

The twenty-sixth Indian National Congress was held at Allahabad on December 26, 1910. It was presided over by William Wedderburn who had realised that Congress was in a difficult position, "being regarded with disfavour by a certain class of officials, while it is attacked by those holding extreme views as ineffective by reason of its moderation".[136] He felt that the bureaucracy was trying to divide and rule. Yet the draft resolution of the Congress expressed "respect towards British Empire".[137] Lajpat Rai who had returned to Indian from England was absent from this Congress session.

The absence of Lajpat Rai from Indian politics had created restlessness in the minds of Punjab people. They wanted to work under his nationalistic leadership. Soon an opportunity presented itself which enabled the people of Punjab to demonstrate their faith and confidence in Lajpat rai. It was the Municipal elections of 1911. A meeting was held at lahore on June 3, in support of his candidature in the Municipal election. Lajpat was also keen to resume political work in the country. During his stay in England and as a result of his contacts with English leaders, he realised that keeping away from the main currents of Indian political life was not a wise policy. His English friends also emphasised the importance of carrying on work in India.

But the Government did not look upon Lajpat Rai's entry into active politics with favour. They had complete record of his activities which they considered as "harmful". However, the Government's attitude changed, and soon Lajpat Rai received a letter from the Commissioner of Lahore stating that the Government had no objection to his contesting election.[138] The governmental records show that the British Government changed their policy in view of Lajpat Rai's "desire to make peace with the Government". But this does not seem to be the real reason. The efforts of the friends of Lajpat Rai in England were responsible for this change. They were persuading the British authorities that the restrictions on Lajpat Rai should be removed. This is clear from the telegram from Ramsay Macdonald, M.P., to Lajpat Rai:

> Parliament rises for holidays.
> Government have no objection to your election.[139]

During election Lajpat Rai addressed numerous meetings which were attended by thousands of people. But he was careful to avoid unpleasant political subjects. He also refused to lead any procession during the election.

In Lahore, Lajpat Rai's election was the subject of the day. Dewan Narendra Nath, Commissioner of Lahore, wrote to His Honour, Sir Loius Dane, that he did not look upon his coming on the Municipal Board with feeling of anxiety: "I think he means no mischief... but if he is opposed to the official view and is outvoted on the Municipal Board, which is likely to be, he will have mass meetings, harangue to them and keep his audience 'spell bound' for a couple of hours".[140] Dane did not consider that his success was desirable but at the same time if the man should be elected, His Honour did not think that much concern need be felt.[141] At last the Government of Punjab agreed that he should be given a fair chance of working for the public good and they proposed to remove all surveillance over him.[142]

Out of six candidates in the field, he was personally assured by the three that he was welcome and that the assurances of the other three were communicated to him. Several leaders of the educated Hindu community assured him that he would be doing the right thing by standing up for a seat of the Municipal Committee. Lajpat Rai assured the Government that if it be proved to his satisfaction, that the Government was opposed to his election he would at once retire as he had no desire to enter the Municipal Committee in opposition to the wishes of the Government.[143]

Dewan Narendra Nath, Commissioner, Lahore, communicated to Lajpat Rai that in case he won the election he would prove by his conduct to the government that he was capable of realising the responsibility of his position. His personal wish was that he might prove helpful to authorities and that he might so move as to make cooperation between them and himself possible.[144] In reply to it Lalaji assured him that he had not the slightest intention of doing anything which might be misunderstood by the officials. On the other hand, "I have the fullest intention of co-operating with them for the public good".[145] But he requested that "the officials should not make him reponsible for the doings of people... and that they should not believe everything that is carried to them about me, often by interested persons..."[146] He was elected to Lahore Municipal Committee, and he secured the highest number of votes in his ward.

Lajpat Rai believed that a Municipal Commissioner had more and greater opportunities of doing public good to the people than a legislative councillor.[147] He discharged his duties as a Municipal Commissioner with usual zeal and to the satisfaction of the Government and the people.

Lajpat Rai formed Elementary Education League in August 1911, with its exclusively pro-Hindi policy. He was encouraged to establish the League with Gokhale's Elementary Education Bill introduced in the Imperial Legislature Council. As regards the development of Hindi, he assured them that within three years every Hindu boy of Lahore would have a knowledge of Devnagari, and when the Elementry Education Bill would be passed than they would receive their education in Hindi and Devanagri.[148]

Lajpat Rai's choice of Hindi as the proposed medium of instruction in the schools under the Hindu Elementary Education League became a subject of controversy in the Muslim press. It may however, be noted that a section of the Punjab Muslims, led by Muhammad Shafi, opposed Gokhale's Elementary Education Bill.

It was during Lajpat Rai's tenure as Municipal Commissioner that the Lahore streets got electric lights. The Chief Municipal Reform associated with his effort, however, was the segregation of prostitutes in the Hira Mandi area. Before the segregation quite a number of them used to play their trade in Anarkali. In 1913, he founded a High School in his native village jagraon, named after his father - the Radhakishan High School.

In 1912, Lajpat Rai re-entered the Congress at its annual session at Bankipore, Patna. Here, the constitutionist leaders brought forward a resolution condemning the Delhi bomb outrage. Lajpat Rai supported the resolution and said: "I know that the heart of this country is entirely against the cult of bomb and if there are any people in this country who believe that by propagating this cult of bomb they can advance the future political progress of the country, they are not only mistaken but they are doing a great wrong not to the past of this country but to the future of this country because they are placing obstacle untold in the way of those who are trying their level best to raise the social, moral and political status of their country, and work in the public life becomes almost impossible in this state of things when bomb after bomb is in this way thrown at persons who are doing their level best to redress our grievances, to make us hopeful, and to put us on a platform of confidence".[149] Lajpat Rai condemned the terrorist activities and considered it not only against the tradition of Indian but also a great hinderance in the political progress of the country. His unforgettable performance at this session was the fervent advocacy of the cause of Indians in South Africa in a vigourous speech which roused the enthusiasm of the audience to a very high pitch.

At the next Congress at Karachi, held in December 1913, he again spoke on this subject. The delegates greatly applauded his bold and vigorous speech. He also led a campaign in the Punjab for raising funds for the Indian sufferers in South Africa. On December 14, 1913, in a letter to Gokhale, Lajpat Rai himself wrote about South African collection thus: "I have ordered another remittance of Rs.2,000 being sent to you yesterday - I hope you will get it along with this letter or a little later".[150]

At Karachi Congress it was resolved to send a deputation of Congressmen to England to represent Indian views on the South African question, the Press Act, the reform of the Indian Council and the separation of judicial and executive functions. Lord Crewe, the Secretary of State for India, was expected to introduce in Parliament a Bill for the reform of the India Office early in the spring of 1914. The members of this deputation were to be selected by the provincial organisations affiliated to the Congress who were to be responsible for the expenses of the trip in case the delegate himself could not find the same. In pursuance of this resolution Lajpat Rai was selected as a representative of the Punjab. The other four members were Bhupendra Nath Basu of Bengal, Krishan Sahay of Bihar and M.A.Jinnah of Bombay.

Lajpat Rai's journey to London was delayed for the police suspected his hand in Lahore bomb case in which accused Balraj and Balmokand were involved and who had been directly and intimately associated with him. After the evidence for the prosecution was finished, he was permitted to go. He reached London on May 17, 1914 by S.S.Marmora.[151] The other Congress delegates had reached earlier.

Before his arrival, Lajpat Rai's Congress colleagues had already seen Lord Crewe, the Secretary of State for India, and discussed with him the provisions of the Bill which he was going to introduce in the House. The Bill aimed at reducing the number of the members of India Council and also effecting improvement in the functioning of the council by increasing the powers of the Secretary of State. On his arrival in London, Lajpat Rai met Wedderburn. "At the meeting", writes Lajpat Rai "the principal subject of discussion was Lord Crewe's India Office Bill, the state of unrest in the Punjab".[152] Lajpat Rai and the other delegates pleaded for larger representation of Indians on the India Council. This, they believed, would make the Council more representative of India. Wedderburn fully concurred with these views.[153]

The Secretary of State, however, rejected these suggestions. It was after this rejection that Lajpat Rai began to demand the total abolition of the Council. Lord Crewe explained this:

> What passes comprehension is demeanour of the delegates. The best known among them, Mr. Lajpat Rai, yesterday publicly advocated the entire abolition of the council. He came to England to plead for larger Indian representation upon it, and now clamours for it to be wiped out of existence.[154]

The bill was, however, very stoutly opposed by the Tory Party, and the Torry Press raised quite a howl over it. The bill in reality raised three issues - the extent to which the council ought to be non-official in its personnel, the manner in which India should be represented and the degree of its control over the Minister. Personally, Lajpat Rai saw no reason to welcome the Bill. But along with his colleague he submitted notes to the Secretary of State in which he suggested radical changes but gave general support to the bill. Lajpat Rai's own views about the bill were reflected as follows:

> The delegates of the Indian National Congress were prepared to accept it as a first instalment of of the intended reform, though they never concealed their disappointment at the inadequate representation of independent Indian opinion, and particularly at the proposed method of selection of Indian members.[155]

On July 7, 1914, the bill was rejected on account of Tory party opposition. Lajpat Rai argued, "The Tory Party in the House of Lords made short work of it, though they spoilt a great deal of logic in doing so."[156] Thus, ended Lajpat Rai's formal official work of the Congress delegation.

After Lord Crewe's bill Lajpat Rai utilised his stay in widening and deepening contacts that might be useful for the cause he had espoused. He had missed Keir Hardie during the Labour leader's visit to India, being at the time a state prisoner in Mandalay in 1907. In 1909 he had of course met Keir Hardie, but in 1914 much fuller opportunities of friendship came. Among the first letters of welcome that Lajpat Rai received on arriving in London in 1914 was one from Hardie "with an ever recurring invitation to lunch at the House of Commons".[157]

Then there was Frederick Mackarness who had worked for the release of Lajpat Rai in 1907. Between him and Lajpat Rai quite naturally a close friendship had developed now. "Frederick Mackarness", writes Lajpat Rai, "was another Englishman from the fountain of whose friendship and hospitality I drank copiously. He had espoused my cause in 1907 and had by his daily persistence in asking questions relating to my deportation lost the goodwill of John Morley and other leaders of the Liberal Party. Before 1907, he was thought of highly. His ripe scholarship, his legal ocumen, his sober and sound opinions, his balanced speeches had marked him out for great things. At one time he was considered to be the coming man in the radical circles. But alas! my deportation led to his fall". He added, "He had never met me, he knew nothing of me. He simply stood for a principle". Lajpat Rai further writes, "Frederick Macarness was by no means a person of revolutionary mentality or tendencies. He strongly disapproved of strong language and of revolutionary methods. He was a man of peace and always advocated constitutional methods of agitation. He had an equally noble-minded wife who was very much interested in Indian philosophy and literature. I had made their acquiantance in 1908-9 and enjoyed their confidence and friendship till the last.[158]

Another much valued friendship was with the Webbs. Lajpat Rai was in correspondence with them. Of them he writes, "Another set of English friends

whose friendship and kindness has been of the greatest service to me are the Webbs. Their learning and scholarship and the monumental works they have written are known the world over, but few perhaps know how kind and good they are as friends. They are socialists but they are not revolutionary socialists. The British Fabian Society, the Fabian mentality, the Fabian literature owe everything to them. They have been instrumental in building up the Labour Party. During my stay in England in 1914, Mr. Sidney Webb was very useful to me..."[159]

In July 1914 at the instance and invitation of the Webbs Lajpat Rai and Bhupendra nath Basu attended the session of the Summer School which was held in the English Lake district on a beautiful spot. Here Lajpat Rai met the best socialist workers and thinkers of England. Among them were Mr. and Mrs. Webb, Bernard Shaw, G.D.H.Cole and Babbit. About the impact Lajpat Rai writes, "It provided me relaxation and instruction".[160]

Lajpat Rai seldom missed an opportunity to study educational institutions abroad. He paid particular attention this time to the problems of the Indian students in England. For this he had several interviews with T.W.Arnold of the India Office and when the editor of the New Statesman at the suggestion of the Webbs who then quided and controlled that paper, agreed to accept a number of articles from him on Indian subjects, Lajpat Rai gave him one on the "Problem of the Indian Students". He discussed the problem from three point of views - educational, economic and political. Lajpat Rai was in favour to establish a system of universal compulsory elementary education in India. Criticising the educational policy of the British India Government he wrote, "It (India) not only suffers from want of schools and colleges and technical institutions but it also suffers from the quality of the education imported in its educational institutions". Again, he felt, the Indian educational policy insists on a great deal of the Indian student's being wasted on high proficiency in the English language and also on teaching all subjects, other than oriental languages, in English.[161] He was in favour of such practical education system which could, beside others make the succeessful students to earn a decent livelihood at the end of his academic career. Lajpat Rai was against the employment of a large number of Europeans in the educational service in India.[162] Writing about the problems of Indian students in England he said they were the victims of "Colour prejudice". He critised the Indian Education Bureau in England which failed to protect the interests of Indian students in the universities, the technical institutions and hospitals. Comparing the educational policy in free countries and governed by foreigners he said, "The difference is that in self governed countries the education of the citizen aims at making him not only an effective and useful member of the body politic, but also patriotic, self-reliant, and independent. In countries governed by bureaucracies such as that which rules India, one of the ideas that actuate the educational policy of the Government is to prolong the rule of the bureaucracy by discouraging all methods of education which might result in the lowering of their prestige, in the weakening of their hold over the people, and in the steady transfer of the power from the bureaucracy to the representatives of the people".[163] Being an advovate of self government within the British Empire as a first step towards the political emancipation, Lajpat Rai suggested a solution to solve the problems of Indian students: "The real solution of the problem lies in opening careers for Indian young men and in bringing into existence conditions of political and economic life in India which may be consistent with individual as well as national self respect". He added, "let Indians have the same position in India as Colonials enjoy in their colonies, or as Englishmen have in England, and the whole problem would be solved automatically". For political emancipation he felt the need of qualitative and meaningful educational policy. As an experienced person he confidently wrote, "Give me the control of the education department and fund necessary to work up my ideas and I would guarantee to you the political emancipation of the country within the life-time of one generation". These views he found as fresh and pertinent 15 years later as at the time of writing and reproduced it in his autobiographical fragment.

Besides the New Statesman, his chief journalistic contacts in London during this period were with the Daily News, the Westminister Gazatte and India (London).

The great War broke out when Lajpat Rai was about to leave London for India. He was keen to return as early as possible. He writes: "Before leaving London for the Summer School I had made all arrangements for a tour on the continent en route to India. It was my intention to visit France, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, the Balkans, Turkey and Egypt. Several friends including the Webbs had given me letters of introduction for prominent people in these countries who could help me in the study of conditions there. It was my intention to leave England on or before the first of August, I returned to London on the 30th of July and found the air full of fears".[164]

When the War broke out Lajpat Rai refused to take up the attitude of the majority of Indian politicians. He objected to the proposal of Congress delegation to issue a statement of loyalty on behalf of the Congress in the British Committee of the Indian Congress. He objected on various grounds: "No formal meeting of the delegation was called to consider the question, the delegation was defunct having finished its work and dissolved itself formally after the rejection of the bill, the Indian leaders at home had not expressed their minds and sent us instruction".[165] Despite his objection some Indian Congressmen in England put Lajpat Rai's name in the belief that he would, as a matter of course, accept a draft made by Sir W.Wedderburn. About this Pandit Bhagwan Din Dube, a Congressman in London, informed Lajpat Rai by wire on August 7, 1914:

> Letter to Lord Crewe assuring our loyalty signed by elderly Indians including delegates, if you wish sign come immediately 3 middle Temple Lane.[166]

Ultimately, he signed the declaration of loyalty on behalf of the Congress at the National Liberal Club. He signed it for two reasons. He believed that England was fighting for the defence of liberty and democracy against German barbarism. He, therefore, did not want to add to the difficulties of the British. He also hoped that Britain, after the end of the war, would have more generous and sympathetic attitude towards the demands and aspirations of the Indians.

While he was away from India, in May 1914, M.K. Gandhi and Lajpat Rai were the proposed candidates for the Presidentship of the twenty-nineth session of the Congress to be held at Madras. Lajpat Rai writes: "In the political life of India my position was well established and it was being suggested that I would be elected president for the next session of the Indian National Congress, to be held at Madras in December 1914. Gandhi returned to India in December but as advised by Gokhale he was to refrain from political activity for a year. Initially five out of the nine Provincial Congress Committees voted him (Lajpat Rai) for the presidentship of the Madras Congress. Though the final choice lay with the Reception Committee, there was every chance of his being elected. When informed of this significant development by a friend in India, he declined the invitation to preside over the high office,[168] even if offered to him. He explained in a letter from England:

> Because I have fundamental differences with most of the Congress leaders both on the principles on which and the manner in which the Congress is run... Congress should be run in the interest of the political education of the people and not for obtaining political concessions from the Government... The Congress propaganda now is affected by two considerations - fear of the Government and fear of the minorities. Both have been carried to a point which has considerably reduced the value of the Congress as a school of political education... I feel that by accepting the Presidentship of the Congress I will be putting myself in a wrong hole.[169]

Lajpat Rai reiterated that his political creed was substantially the same as it was before the deportation. The, prospect of discussing ordinary platitudes in a presidential speech to win laurels did not appeal to him.

Although, the Madras Reception Committee initially recommended Lajpat Rai for the office of the President, but soon opposition to this recommendation began to grow. Before his wishes were known in India some of the prominent Congress leaders such as Dinshaw Wacha, Subramania Iyer, G.A.Natesan, Nawab Syed Mohamed and Fazul Haq, scared at the prospects of Lajpat Rai's election as President, set afoot a move to make a second reference to the Provincial Committees with the motive of reversing the earlier decision. Eventually, they succeeded. Two of the Provincial Committees changed their decision under pressure. Justifying this action, Subramanya Iyer explained that since Lajpat Rai was a person non grata with the Government and with the Muslim, his election to the presidentship was inopportune.[170] In fact some Muslim members of the Congress warned that they would not attend the session if Lajpat Rai presided.[171] It appears that there was opposition to Lajpat Rai becoming the Congress President from certain Muslim quarters. Lajpat Rai's nomination was turned down and the Reception Committee elected Bhupendra Nath as the president of the Madras Congress.

II

The attitude of the Government towards Lajpat Rai was based on hatred and suspicion on account of inadequate information during 1906-14. Earlier, his movements were watched in England in 1905. The Government had history sheet of his life, activities and speeches which he had delivered during the Congress sessions of 1905 and 1906.[172] But the Punjab which was in ferment on account of various unjust administrative measures and legislative acts in 1906-07 gave opportunity to the Government to deport him to Mandalay because he was the most popular leader of the province. Sir Denzil Ibbetson, the lieutenant Governor of Punjab, in a Minute to the Viceroy described him dangerous agitator and revolutionary, and requested the Viceroy to deport Lajpat Rai. Erle Richards and Sir H.Adamson, Members of the Viceroy's Council, were against the policy of deportation. They preferred to adopt other stringent methods. But the Viceroy, trusting the Lieutenant Governor's judgement, gave him all he had asked for. Minto, therefore, issued orders of deportation without consulting the Secretary of State for India. Soon he realised: "Lajpat Rai is undoubtedly a man of high character and very much respected by his countrymen".[173] The views of Morley, the Secretary of State, about Lajpat Rai were entirely based on the Viceroy's report. Earlier, Morley supported the deportation in the British Parliament on the ground of Ibbetson's Minute. But when he was informed about the real reasons of Punjab's unrest, he immediately issued order of his release.

The deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai was a turning point in his life as also in the formulation of British policy and attitude towards the Punjab leader. From now onwards the Government began to view his activities with the utmost suspicion. Consequently, Lajpat Rai was placed under permanent surveillance. He was closely watched by the detectives of the Government. This is obvious from his letter dated January 28, 1908 to Gokhale.[174] Even his social work was secretly watched by the Police. On July 9, 1908, in a letter to Gokhale, Lajpat Rai wrote: "My men are being followed and worried by the Police and some of the Europeans have expressed the suspicion referred to above". "The truth is that", he added, "all sort of philanthropist and national work is being looked down with suspicion by the authorities". He further added, "They do not like the nationalists doing any work work which is likely to add to their popularity and influence with their own countrymen. This is of course impossible to avoid".[175] When Lajpat Rai reached London, he reiterated on August 23, 1908: "I am watched and followed by detectives even in this country".[176]

The private records reveal that after police raid in November 1909 at Bhai Parmanand's house and the recovery of two letters written by Lajpat Rai the C.I.D. surveillence over Lalaji was tightened. The police searched his library and took away some books from his Lahore residence. In this connection he made a complain to the British M.P. Ramsay Macdonald,[177] who later raised the question in the Parliament. Again in 1910, he complained to Mrs. Macdonald: "My persecution continues to torment me in different ways though I am doing absolutely nothing and everything is quiet here".[178]

After his six month sojourn in Britain and Europe (March-September 1910), Lajpat Rai reached Bombay. He was very much upset to see the difference between the treatment accorded to the Europeans and Indians landing at Bombay and other Indian ports. In this connection he wrote to Macdonald, "there would be no complains if both were treated equally... the examination of every Indian luggage at the Indian ports is being conducted not for the purpose of custom duties but for political reason". "Suppose", he added, "you have a book in your luggage which has the word 'revolution' in its title. It is not a proscribed book, yet the custom authorities go through its pages, detain you and then make a note of the book". Giving example of Dwarka Das, Vakil of the Punjab Chief Court, he further said that he was carrying some books on French Revolution and allied movements.[179] The Custom authorities made a note of all these books. Lajpat Rai argued that he never witnessed such unequal treatment with passangers in America and European continent.[180]

A great domestic tragedy occured for Lajpat Rai on February 23, 1911. His second son, Pyare Krishna of whom he entertained high hopes, was sent to England and started studying pharmaceutical chemistry to be able to undertake original and much needed work regarding Indian medicinal herbs and drugs. He had not been long a student there when he fell ill and had to be admitted to a Devonshire Sanotorium in the beginning of 1910. In September 1910, Lajpat Rai brought his sick son to Lahore. Rai's friends made repeated enquiries about the recovery of son.[181] But the illness proved fatal and he died at the age of 20. "The death has created a void for me which I do not know how to fill up",[182] wrote Lajpat Rai. The authorities did not cooperate him or spare him during this difficult time. He complained that the police harassed the physician who was treating his ill son. In a letter dated March 9, 1911, he wrote to Ramsay Macdonald thus:

> About ten days before the death of my son I sent for a nature physician to see and treat my son, from Amritsar. The place you know. After the old man who happens to be a Deccani Brahmin

> and who has been living in Amritsar and dispersing medicians free to all people who come to him, had returned from a visit to my place at Lahore, he received a visit from the police and was asked to explain where he had been and for what purpose. This frightened the old man and the next time I sent my man for him he declined to come .[183]

Further, Lajpat Rai was the shareholder of a Joint Stock Company situated at Lahore. Lala Jaswant Rai, M.A. ex-proprietor of the Panjabee, was its owner. The police made searches in the office and enquired about Lajpat Rai. No illegal document was found.[184]

Thus, Lajpat Rai, his family members and friends were under surveillence of the Punjab Police. A British M.P. raised questions in the House of Common about the survelliance of Lajpat Rai which further antagonised the Punjab Government.[185]

Again, Lajpat Rai was closely watched during the viceroyalty of Lord Hardinge (1910-16). The Criminal Intelligence Department was behind him. In a note submitted on July 22, 1911 to Lord Hardinge, J.L. Jenkins, Member of the Viceroy's Council, described Lajpat Rai as "by no means the harmless philanthropist".[186] Lord Hardinge's Government fully believed that Lajpat Rai was 'a revolutionary and political enthusiast inspired by the most intense hatred of the British Government'.[187] To prove this view the note gives the following quotation from a speech delivered by him on December 13, 1905:

> Youngmen your blood is hot. The tree of the nation calls for blood. It is watered with blood. The writing in heaven concerning the intellectual idea of the Indian nation appears to have been inscribed in blood. The memory of your martyrdom will remain. The foundations of buildings have Khingar thrown into them to make them strong. Let us throw ourselves into the foundations of the National edifice to serve the purpose of Khingar.[188]

The note described Lajpat Rai as, "more careful in his utterances, though his meaning was sufficiently obvious, but his lieutenant, Ajit Singh, was more outspoken, and his speeches teem with exhortations to rise and slaughter the British oppressors".[189] Another charge against Lajpat Rai was that he had advised Bhai Parmanand to supply revolutionary literature to Indian students abroad which would "lead to solid results". The British thought that Lajpat Rai's efforts in famine-relief in the United Provinces were inspired not by philanthrophy, but by hatred of the British and of the Christian religion for he himself said that "something" ought to be done to prevent the hearts of the people being drawn to the British officers and the missionaries who were engaged in the relief of the famine-stricken.[190] The Government considered him, "most notorious of the gang of conspirators and plotters of assassination", and they alleged that Lajpat Rai had a hand in the establishment of various secret revolutionary societies in Europe and America. "In fact", the note says, "whatever Lajpat Rai may be now, there is not the slightest doubt that he has been a dangerous conspirator responsible for much of the trouble and the crime by which India has been disturbed during the past few years."[191]

In another letter to the Viceroy, dated September 1, 1911, Jenkins giving the latest information about Lajpat Rai wrote that, "he and Harkishan Lal and Gupta, Editor of the Tribune, have entered into an alliance. Gupta wishes to start a campaign in the districts against revenue settlement - dangerous thing anywhere and most dangerous in the Punjab. Lajpat Rai said he could not at present take any prominent or open part in any movement against Government, but would give Gupta letters of recommendation to his friends".[192] The Commissioner of Lahore, Dewan Bahadur Narendra nath, who described Lajpat Rai, a "dreadful" man to deal with, had written to him asking what attitude he meant to adopt towards Gupta's campaign. It was pointed out in the letter that Punjab Government had power to remove him from the Municipal Board of Lahore if he misconducted himself.[193]

In 1914, Lajpat Rai's membership of the Congress delegation which was to go to England raised a hue and cry among British bureaucracy. They tried to prevent his departure on the ground that he was involved in Lahore conspiracy case.

Lord Hardinge also viewed Lajpat Rai with suspicion. He regarded him as a "dangerous" leader and a person who was "in touch with the Extremists".[194] The Government of India and India Office in England also did not view with favour the activities of Lajpat Rai. When the Viceroy informed the Secretary of State about Lajpat Rai's inclusion in Congress deputation which was coming to England the latter felt concerned. He replied that the "affair is complicated by the statement that extreme men like Lajpat Rai are mentioned as coming over. There is obvious difficulty in admitting him to this office".[195] The Viceroy wanted to prevent Lajpat Rai coming to England on the ground of his deportation in 1907. But Secretary of State replied that "mere fact of his having been deported is not sufficient in itself".[196] The Members of the Viceroy's Council were not in favour of permitting Congress deputation to see the Secretary of State. They informed Hardinge that Lord Curzon had refused to meet Sir Henry Cotton on the ground that he came out as "President of the Indian Congress" in December 1904. Reginald Craddock, a Member of the Viceroy's Council, described the impending meeting of a National Congress delegation with the Secretary of State as "a new and dangerous departure, since it will break the rule that communique of a public or quasi-public character from the Secretary of State to India must come through the Government of India".[197] He informed the Viceroy that Lord Morley met Indian poiticians like Gokhale, Surendranath, Bhupendranath, etc. but the interviews and discussions were always private.[198] He described the permission to meet Secretary of State as a "formal recognition that it has ever received in India".[199] But Reginald Craddock realized that he did not think that it would be "politic to attempt to bar Lajpat Rai's presence among the Indian received privately by Lord Crewe officially".[200] He was not very enthusiastic to meet Congress deputation. He wrote to Viceroy that "these gentlemen apparently wanted to talk about all sorts of subjects, the Press Act, the separation of judicial and Executive functions and God knows what. In any case conversations indicating their views may appear more appropriate in India, can not be discussed here at all".[201] Lajpat Rai knew that he was not responsible in Delhi and Lahore case in which some persons had died. He reached London in May 1914.

However, Lajpat Rai was considered as an extremist and dangerous by the Government. His movements were closely watched by the secret agents and the Government had record of his activities.

Notes and References

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3. Lajpat Rai: Writings and Speeches, Vol. I, pp. 75-76.
4. Ibid., p. 309.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., p. 37.
7. Letter, July 26, 1906, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, Gokhale Papers.
8. Letter, March 3, 1907, Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Letter, July 26, 1906, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, Ibid.
11. Letter, October 4, 1906, Ibid.
12. Letter, August 18, 1906, Ibid.
13. Letter, March 3, 1906, Ibid.
14. The Ambalal Provincial Conference of 1906 (Lahore,

N.D.), p. 11 IV.

15. The Tribune (Lahore), October 19, 1906.

16. Panjabee (Lahore) October 13, 1906.

17. Letter, October 4, 1906, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, Gokhale Papers.

18. Panjabee, op. cit.

19. Lajpat Rai, op. cit., pp. 128-131.

20. Hindu (Madras), July 19, 1906.

21. Letter, July 2, 1906, Wacha to Gokhale, Gokhale Papers.

22. Letter, August 23, 1906, Wedderburn to Lajpat Rai, Ibid.

23. Letter, September 11, 1906, Lajpat Rai to William Wedderburn, Naoroji Papers.

24. Ibid.

25. Letter, October 20, 1906, Gokhale to Natesan, ibid.

26. R.P.Masani, Dadabhai Naoroji: The Grand Old Man of India (London 1932), p. 97.

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28. Letter, October 4, 1906, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, Gokhale Papers.

29. A tonsorial casualty deserve to be noted in December 1906 at Calcutta. Like many of the Arya Samaj Leaders of his day, Lajpat Rai had a long beard for many years. As he alighted from the train at Howrah Railway Station to attend the Congress Session, the beard served a distinctive emblem for the crowds to spot the Lala from a distance. He went to the house of his host, Rai Bahadur Rallia Ram (a Punjabi and Arya Samajist), serving

as Superintending Engineer in the Bengal Eastern railway, with a flowing beard, and from there arrived at the Congress session with a clean chin. He never again grew a beard, though his moustaches remained intact till the last.

30. Report of the twenty-second I.N.C., Calcutta, 1906, Presidential Address.

31. A.I.C.C. File No. 1/1885, 1920.

32. Khaparde Diary, December 31, 1906, Khaparde Papers.

33. Report of the Twenty-second I.N.C., Calcutta, 1906, p. 72.

34. Modern Review, March 1907, p. 205.

35. Lajpat Rai's Autobiographical writings, p. 114.

36. Report of the Twenty-second I.N.C., Calcutta, 1906, p. ii.

37. Report of the Twentieth second I.N.C., Calcutta, 1906. iii.

38. Ibid.,

39. Ibid.

40. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political-A) August 1907, Nos. 148-235.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

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47. Athale, D.V., The Life of Lokamanya Tilak, (Poona, 1981), p. 115. See also Khaparde Diary, November 24, 1907, Khaparde Papers.

48. Ibid.

49. Letter, January 8, 1908, Gokhale to Newspapers, Gokhale Papers.

50. Letter, November 3, 1907, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, Ibid.

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54. Ibid.

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57. Ibid.

58. B.N.N.R., Bengalee (Calcutta), December 25, 1907.

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60. Khaparde Diary, December 23, 1907, Khaparde Papers.

61. Letter, January 8, 1908, Gokhale to Newspaper, Gokhale Papers.

62. Athalaya, D.V., The Life of Lokmanya Tilak (Poona, 1921), p. 168.

63. The Surat Split, (Natesan, Madras, 1908), pp. 22-24.

64. Khaparde's diary, December 27, 1907, Khaparde Papers.

65. Nevinson, H.W., The New Spirit in India, (London, 1908), p. 43.

66. Letter, January 2, 1908, Jawaharlal to Motilal Nehru, M.L.Nehru Papers.

67. Ghose, Auronbindo, Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother, (Pondicherry, 1953), p. 47.

68. The Surat Congress (Madras, 1908), p. 21.

69. Ibid., p. 27.

70. Letter, January 8, 1908, Gokhale to Newspapers, Gokhale Papers.

71. Letter, December 27, 1907, Lajpat Rai to Krishnaswamy Iyiar, Ibid.

72. Surat Congress and Conference (Madras, 1908), Appendix B.

73. N.R. Inamdar, Political Thought and leadership of Lokmanya Tilak (New Delhi, 1983), pp. 290-91.

74. Lajpat Rai: Writings and Speeches, Vol. I, p. 148, See also Home Department (Poll) Deposit, Nos. 7, November 1908.

75. Letter, April 1, 1908, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, Gokhale Papers.

76. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political-B), Nos. 111-118, January 1908.

77. Bapat, S.V., Reminiscences and Anecdotes of Lokmanya Tilak (Poona, 1928), p. 182.

78. Letter, January 8, 1908, Gokhale to Newspapers,

Gokhale Papers.

79. Letter, March 20, 1908, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, Ibid.

80. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political), Nos. 111-118, May 1908.

81. The Indian National Congress (Natesan, Madras, 1911), Appendix B, Article I.

82. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political-B), Nos.63-70, October 1908.

83. The Panjabee (Lahore), July 15, 1909.

84. Ibid.

85. For example the article in The Tribune (Lahore), January 8, 1908.

86. Letter, January 22, 1908, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, Gokhale Papers.

87. Home Department (Deposit), November 1908, No.7.

88. Ibid. The followig printed instructions were given to the Volunteers by Lala Lajpat Rai:
    1. "Volunteers are requested to note that the work of the Relief Committee is purely philanthropic and that they should not carry on any religious and political propaganda along with it".
    2. "Volunteers are required not to interfere in any way with official relief work".
    3. "The principal work of the Volunteers is to relieve orphans, destitute children, and widows, but they are authorised to use their discretion in extending relief to other persons who may be in extreme distress".
    4. "No orphans or children are to be removed from any district without the permission of a Magistrate, but children can be collected at any place within the district and there property fed and otherwise looked after."

5. "Volunteers are requested to keep detailed accounts of all sums expended and to send these, together with a report of the work done, to the undersigned once a week".
6. "Where no local committees have been appointed or local gentlemen have been requested to guide the relief work the volunteers should take instructions from them and should carry on their work under their guidance - Lajpat Rai, General Secretary, Arys Samaj, Famine Relief Committee."

89. Modern Review, Vol. 11 (July-December, 1909), p. 250.

90. Home Department (Political-Deposit), November, 1908, No. 7.

91. Home Department (Political-Deposit), November, 1908, No. 7.

92. Ibid.

93. Ibid.

94. Home Department (Political - Deposit), November, 1908, No. 7.

95. Ibid.

96. Letter, May 28, 1908, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, Ibid.

97. Letter, August 20, 1908, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, Ibid.

98. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political, Deposit), Nos. 7, November, 1908. See also Home Deptt. (Poll.), Nos. 63-70, November 1908.

99. Letter, January 22, 1908, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, Gokhale Papers.

100. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political-B), Nos. 63-70, November, 1908. Ram Bhaj Datta Chaudhri had different views about the absence of Rai from India in 1908. In a private confidential letter from London

to Gokhale who was also there Datt wrote: "I believe you must have read Lala Lajpat Rai's letter in the Panjabee, as why he left Panjab for England and you will find he has made some statements which are today the least deplorable like Shaymji Krishna Verma. They will go back to India to act as leavers when the people are ready to march on to the field of action... If I had the power I would force these gentlemen back among the people who did for them all that lay in their power to do under the circumstances", Letter, October 26, 1908, Ram Bhaj Datt Chaudhri to Gokhale, Gokhale Papers.

101. Foreign Department, G.O.I. (Geneal-B), Nos. 13, 1909, Confidential.

102. Ibid.

103. The Government reports describe that Lajpat Rai went to England via Paris where "a meeting was held at the house of K.L.Banker in his honour. Kotwal and several others Extremists were present and took Lajpat Rai to task for his moderation". He arrived in London on September 5, 1908 and drove to the Indian House. He was one of the first residents at the house when it was started in 1904, Ibid.

104. Home Department, G.O.I (Political-B), Nos. 2-11, February 1909.

105. Foreign Department, G.O.I. (General), No. 13, 1909. Confidential.

106. Feroz Chand, Lajpat Rai: Life and Work (New Delhi, 1978), p. 230.

107. Ibid.

108. Foreign Department, G.O.I. (General), Confidential-B, No. 13, 1909.

109. Report of the Twenty-fourth I.N.C., Madras, 1908, pp. 1-2.

110. Home Department, (Political-B), No.1-11, February, 1909.

111. The Tribune (Lahore), July 5, 1909.

112. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political-B) Nos. 103-110.

113. Ibid.

114. Ibid.

115. Report of the Twenty-fifth I.N.C., 1909, pp. 1-2.

116. Foreign Department, G.O.I. (General), Confidential-B, vide, Circular No. 7 of 1910.

117. Ibid.

118. Ibid.

119. Robinson, Francis, Separatism Among Indian Muslim: The Politics of the United Provinces Muslims, 1860-1923 (New Delhi, 1975), p. 171.

120. The Indian Review, May, 1909.

121. Letter, March 4, 1909, Lajpat Rai to the editor, Times, quoted in Stanley Wolpert, Morley and India: 1906-1910 (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1961), p. 196.

122. Panjabee, July 15, 1909.

123. Feroz Chand, op. cit., p. 242.

124. Ibid., p. 244.

125. Ibid.

126. Ibid.

127. Letter, November 16, 1909, Lajpat Rai to Ramsay Macdonald, Macdonald Papers.

128. Lajpat Rai's son, Pyare Kishan, was in a sanatoriam for consumption in Dartnor, Devanshire. He arrived at Marseilles on the 1st April and preceeded to Paris where he remained until the 9th April, 1910. Nothing is known of what he did there and how he went to London. He arrived at London on 29th April, 1910 where he took up his residence at No. 3 Glozebury Road, West Kensnigten, and latterly went to stay at 280 Cromwell Groul Shepher's Bush. He visited on several occasions his son who was still in a weak condition. Ibid.

129. Foreign Department, G.O.I. (General), Confidential-B, 1910, No. 43.

130. Foreign Department, G.O.I. (General), Confidential-B, No. 7, 1910.

131. Ibid.

132. Ibid.

133. Ibid.

134. Ibid.

135. Quoted in Feroz Chand, op. cit, pp. 247-48. Mrs. Dryhurst became an excellent friend of Lajpat Rai. In 1910, he visited her house on several occasions and she attended several of his "gay little Indian luncheous" at which he regaled his London friends on eastern cookery. One afternoon when Lajpat Rai was a guest of her house, the wife of an Indian Army Officer or rather of an officer of the Army in India happened to call on her and hearing Lajpat Rai's name she drew the hostress aside "with horror on her face" and said: "Do you know that you are entertaining the most dangerous man of all India". When Lajpat Rai went to the United States in 1914 she wrote about him to her women friends in Chicago, "where they made much of him, and wrote afterwards warmly in his praise". Lajpat Rai saw her for the last time some fifteen years

later when at his request she wrote an article for his weekly The People, criticising the Soviet policy towards Georgia. Ibid.

136. Letter, December 17, 1910, William Wedderburn to Hardinge, Hardinge Papers.

137. Telegram, December 26, 1910, H.I.H. Crew to Viceroy, enclosure of the Congress draft resolution, Hardinge Papers.

138. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political-B), July 1911, Nos. 1-4.

139. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political-B), August 1911, Nos. 41-44.

140. Extract from a demi-official letter dated August 17, 1911, Home Department, G.O.I. (Political), Nos, 121-129, November 1911.

141. Ibid.

142. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political) Nos. 42/43, March 17, 1912.

143. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political), No. 121-129, November 1911.

144. Letter, August 23, 1911, Dewan Narendra Nath to Lajpat Rai, Ibid.

145. Letter, August 29, 1911, Lajpat Rai to Dewan Narendra Nath, Ibid.

146. Ibid.

147. Ibid., See also Tribune, July 5, 1911.

148. Punjab Native Newspapers Reports, 1911, Vol. 11, p. 305; Paisa Akhbar, August 15, 1911. See also Home Department, G.O.I. (Political), Part-B, October 1911, Nos. 46-49.

149. Report of the Twenty-seventh I.N.C., Bankipore,

1912., pp. 39-40.

150. Letter, December 14, 1913, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, Gokhale Papers.

151. Lajpat Rai's last Autobiographical Fragment, op. cit.

152. Ibid.

153. Ibid.

154. Ibid.

155. Lajpat Rai's Autobiographical Fragment, The People (Lahore) January 4, 1931, p. 7.

156. Ibid., p. 10.

157. Quoted in Feroz Chand, op. cit., p. 259.

158. Ibid., pp. 259-260.

159. Ibid.

160. J.S.Dhanki (ed.), The Story of My Life by Lala Lajpat Rai: An Unknown Fragment (New Delhi, 1978), p. 48.

161. Ibid., pp. 64-65.

162. Ibid. p. 64.

163. Ibid., p. 64.

164. Ibid., p. 10.

165. Ibid.

166. Ibid.. February 1, 1931.

167. Lajpat Rai's last Autobiographical Fragments, February 4, 1931, op. cit., p. 6.

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169. Ibid.

170. Lajpat Rai: Writings and Speeches, Vol. I, p. 216.

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172. Home Department, G.O.I. (Poitical-B), August 1907, Nos. 148-235.

173. Quoted in Syed Raza Wasti's Lord Minto and the Indian Nationalist Movement, 1905-1910 (Oxford, 1964, p. 104.

174. Letter, January 28, 1908, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, Gokhale Papers.

175. Letter, July 9, 1908, Ibid.

176. Letter, November 23, 1908, Ibid.

177. Letter, November 16, 1909, Lajpat Rai to Ramsay Macdonald, Macdonald Papers.

178. Letter, November 17, 1910, Lajpat Rai to Mrs. Macdonald, ibid.

179. Letter, November 24, 1910, Lajpat Rai to Ramsey Macdonald, ibid, See also private Diary of Dwarka Das, 1910, Dwarka Das Fapers.

180. Ibid.

181. Letter, November 17, 1910, Lajpat Rai to Mrs. Ramsey Macdonald, Macdonald Papers.

182. Letter, March 9, 1911, Lajpat Rai to Ramsey Macdonald, Ibid.

183. Ibid.

184. Ibid.

185. Letter, March 16, 1911, Lajpat Rai to Ramsey Macdonald, Ibid.

186. Note, July 22, 1911, J.L.Jenkins to Hardinge, Hardings Papers.

187. Ibid.

188. Ibid.

189. Ibid.

190. Ibid.

191. Ibid.

192. Letter, September 1, 1911, Jenkins to Hardinge, Ibid.

193. Ibid.

194. Letter, March 4, 1914, Hardinge to Crewe, Ibid.

195. Letter, April 3, 1914, Hardinge to Crewe, Ibid.

196. Letter, April 30, 1914, Crewe to Hardinge, Ibid.

197. Letter, April 25, 1914, Reginald Craddock to Hardinge, Ibid.

198. Letter, April 25, 1914, Reginald Craddock to Hardinge, Ibid.

199. Ibid.

200. Ibid.

201. Letter, April 3, 1914, Crewe to Hardinge, Ibid.

Chapter 3

THE DEPORTATION

In May 1907 The Punjab was in a state of ferment; it was looked by the local government as a centre of subversive activities with Lajpat Rai as its ring-leader. The "unrest" was on account of the Colonisation Bill, the Land Alienation Amendment Bill, the increase of land revenue in the Rawalpindi District and the appalling morality from plague. The Punjab Government greatly exaggerated the "unrest" and succeeded in securing from Minto's Government the orders for deporting Lajpat Rai.

After the annexation of Punjab in 1849, the British Government adopted a policy calculated to conciliate the people of the province, especially the Sikhs. They made a series of changes in the political, territotial and administrative set-up of the province. The British greatly succeeded in their aim. One can say that from 1849 till the end of 19th century, broadly speaking, Punjab was a "loyal" and pacified province. They proved their loyalty in the revolt of 1857.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, there were some important factors which led to awakening and political consciousness in the province. One of them was the introduction of Western education. For this purpose a large number of schools and colleges were established.[1] It generated a new nationalistic outlook especially among the new middle classes who imbibed the ideas of political liberty from the writings of European thinkers.

Then, there was the Arya Samaj founded in 1877. The founder of the Samaj, Swami Dayanand,[2] has been compared to Martin Luther who deounced the corruption of the priestcraft and sought to restore the authority of the Vedas. He attempted to revive and reform Hinduism through a reinterpretation of its history and sacred literature. He claimed that the Vedas were given to the Aryas at a time when India stood first in knowledge and cultural achievement. Descendants of the Aryas had been led away from the Vedas - the source of all truth and light - by false doctrines and by the treachery of the Brahmins. India's fall from her golden age had been completed during the Muslim and British conquests, when the degraded Hindus began quarreling and they fell prey to wine and beef urged upon them by the new rulers.[3] In Punjab its membership included a large proportion of Hindu commercial castes which virtually monopolised western education and the new professions introduced by the British.[4] The Arya Samaj shaped the political attitudes of Punjabi Hindus by giving them an interpretation of India's past, providing a vision of and pride in the Hindu nation, and suggesting remedies for India's economic degradation. This influence was particularly evident in the intellectual development of Lajpat Rai. Between 1893 and 1900, Aryas gradually became interested in provincial politics. Many of its members were also members of the Indian National Congress. They condemned the educational policy and inadequate famine relief work of the Government. They also criticised an excise tax on cotton which was imposed by the Government in 1895.[5] Aryas were prominent in 1896 and 1898 provincial conference and the subsequent political programme of the association. In 1898, for example, they helped to organise the agitation against the Punjab Alienation Land Bill. At the turn of the century, the Samajists were completely involved in local poliitics. Thus, the Arya Samaj was helping to produce a powerful educated community in the province which possessed the courage of its convictions besides a deep faith and pride in the roots of the past glory..

The association of the Punjab leaders with Indian National Congress also helped to broaden the notion of nationhood in the province. The Congress had held its first session at Lahore in 1893. Besides other things, it gave an opportunity to Punjab leaders to discuss with many prominent leaders of the national organisation the important questions of the day. Again in 1900, they invited the Congress to Lahore. In 1904, the Punjab Provincial Congress sent its leader Lajpat Rai to England as a Congress delegate.

The political awakening in the Punjab was also the result of some contemporary literary works. Alama Iqbal's Hindustan Hamara[6] had become the rallying cry for the expression of patriotic fervour. His famous poem Bulbal Ki Faryad[7] was symbolical of prayer for India's demand for freedom. Another poet Mulkh Raj Bhalla wrote his Ram Chander Ke Darshan.[8] Ostensibly it was a call to active social and religious reform but by innuendoes it asserted that the Indians should occupy the same place of honour in their country as others did in theirs.

Thus, by the early years of the twentieth century the political situation had gradually changed in the Punjab. There was widespread involvement at all levels in all areas of politics, from local self governing bodies to social, educational, public and political associations of various kinds. Later, the partition agitation and the Swadeshi movement in Bengal also influenced the Punjab. But the chief factor in the growing unrest was agrarian grievances.

The unrest in the Punjab was largely due to the Punjab Colonisation Bill. The Chenab Colony in the Punjab was mostly inhabited by ex-soldiers - a majority of them being Jat-Sikhs. Earlier, for their services they had been given lands in the rainless tract but now irrigated by the canals. As the size of each holding was gradually being reduced by partition among the heirs, the Government proposed to check their further division by passing an Act providing for inheritance by primogeniture. There was great resentment against the measure; people regarded it as unjustified interference in their traditional rights relating to the division of property. A large number of protest meetings were held throughout the province.

This Bill was strongly opposed in the Punjab Legislative Council and numerous petitions were sent.[9] This Bill affected the educated classes also, as a good number of their leading men had proprietary interests in the colony which, in their opinion, were now threatened by the proposed legislation. This was the common platform upon which the educated and the uneducated joined their hands.[10] Throughout March, April and May 1907, public meetings were held against the Colonization Bill at Lahore, Rawalpindi, Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Lyallpur, as well as in surrounding villages. On January 21, 1907, Lajpat Rai informed Gokhale that "our province is just now in the throes of a fresh revolution on the bills before the local Council. They are both mischievous and dishonest (a) The Punjab land alienation Bill and (b) the Land Colonisation Bill".[11]

Here, it may be mentioned about the stand taken against the bills by the Indian members in the Punjab Council. The Indian members of the Select Committee on the bill, Thakur Mahan Chand and Umar Hayat Khan, managed to be absent from the meetings of the Committee and did not sign the report.[12] When the Council met on February 28, 1907, the anti-colonization Bill movement had gathered sufficient strength. With a view to alloying the fears of the members, Douie, Settlement Commissioner, Punjab, gave the history of colonization, the figures of the allottees in the Chenab colony, and asserted that the measure had been misunderstood and misrepresented by the interested parties. Reacting to the growing agitation in the province, the Select Committee and the Government members proposed drastic changes in the draft bill. The changes suggested were so sweeping that it became difficult for the Council members to formulate any definite opinion about the merits and demerits of Bill. Umar Hyat Khan, therefore, advised that further time should be given to the members of the Select Committee to go through the papers throughly. Sardar Pratap Singh opposed the 'retrospective' clause of the bill and the rules of succession, etc., and demanded that it be referred to the Select Committee again.

The President, however, did not agree to the postponement of the bill. When the House divided, all the Indian members, voted against the measure, but the Lt. Governor carried the House with the support of official members, four against three. The Indian members did not lose heart. When the motion was again taken up, they proposed a number of amendments but all of them, except one, which was accepted in a modified form,[13] were lost. The government motions to amend sections 16, 23, 24, 25, 26(b), 27 and 28 were, however carried. Thus, for the first time, in the history of legisation in the Punjab, the Government amended seven clauses of a bill consisting of only 32 effective clauses, and that too after the Select Committee had submitted its report to the House. When the bill, however, moved for approval only Umar Hayat Khan, himself a grantee voted against the bill and in his dissenting note said, "tenants and owners feel that the powers of re-entry (resumption of title) given to the collectors are too severe and that this should not be exercised at all in the case of owners unless it was provided for in the original agreement.[14] Pratap Singh and Mahan Chand, however, lost their nerve during the third reading of the bill and fell in line with the official group. The bill was ratified by the Lt. Governor on March 5 and sent to the Government of India on March 16, 1907. While the bill was being considered by the legislature, and the Home and Revenue departments of the Government of India, there was a furore in the province against the bill. Memorials were sent by the Zamindar association and Khalsa Diwan of the Chenab colony to the Government of India through the Punjab Government.[15] The Indian members in the Punjab Council, thus, for the first time in the ten years history of the council, consistently opposed an official manoeuvre to rush through an unpopular bill. The measure was also strongly criticised by most of the provincial newspapers.[16] The Zamindar said that the day bill was passed in the Council was "as sorrowful as the day of Muharram" The Panjabee regretted that measures which had evoked such strong protest, were allowed to have been passed.[17] Commenting on the wider dimensions of the political struggle in the province, it said: "It (political struggle) is no longer confined to the much abused "Babu Class" but is tangibly in evidence amongst the masses of the sturdy peasantry of the Punjab. The dissatisfaction against the land colonisation act is finding loud illiterate jats, Arians and other owning or cultivating land in the Chenab colony. Meeting after meeting, attended by thousands of colonists and held at far off corners of the colony, very much removed from Lyallpur, is reported...[18] Even loyalist papers like the *Khalsa Advocate* felt that the bill "touched the colonist on his most sensitive point - his confidence in the absolute honour of the Government".[19] Thus, the Indian members in the Punjab Council, Punjab Associations and newspapers opposed the Bills.

In Punjab, there was also widerspread dissatisfaction among the peasantry owing to the enhancement of water rates[20] and land revenue[21] in the Rawalpindi settlement. It had created discontent among the "Indian troops in the province owing to their being drawn from the ranks of the peasantry".[22] These unwise steps were taken at a time when the Zamindars in the canal colonies were economically threatened by crop failure and a labour shortage. For thirteen years scarcity had prevailed almost without intermission in the province.

Then there was plague. The first plague case in the Punjab was detected in 1897 and soon it spread taking about two million lives by 1910. Before Lajpat Rai's deportation, the official record of death from plague in the Punjab rose to nearly 65,000 in one week.[23] The large scale mortality was responsible for creating bitterness in the minds of the people and the comparative immunity of the Europeans led to popular rumour that the British were spreading the disease. This greatly increased racial antagonism.

Imposition of illegal fines in the canal colonies was still another cause of discontent. "I am told an excellent authority", Minto informed Morley, "that the amount collected in fines during the last four years was 11 lakhs, and that in all probability reckoning in addition to the fines, bribes paid by the colonists to subordinate officials, the whole amount would equal about a crore and a half. It is perfectly monstrous. It really makes my blood boil. No wonder there was discontent, and yet in all probability, I believe, these poor people would have continued to be mulcted if the agitators had not seen their opportunity of publishing their grievances to the world. It is no excuse whatever for the Punjab Government to say that they were ignorant of what was going on. They must at any rate have known that 11 lakhs of fines were contributed to their revenues".[24]

The Government policy towards Indian Press was also responsible for creating anti-British sentiment. Indian opinion was constantly irritated by the abuse and ridicule heaped upon the educated Indians by the Civil and Military Gazzette, the leading Anglo-Indian paper of Lahore. Even Denzil Ibbetson, the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, admitted the harm done by such press. When asked twice by the Viceroy to put an end to this kind of journalism as stirring up hatred between the races, Sir Denzil Ibbetson refused to prosecute.[25] On the contrary, the Indian papers were prosecuted for articles criticising the British government. This certainly created greater incitement to racial animosity.[26] In Lahore, the discontent was intensified by the prosecution of the Panjabee for publishing two articles on April 11, 1906 entitled, "How Misunderstanding Occur" and "A Deliberate Murder". The first referred to the death from exposure of two Indians who were employed to carry the luggage of the Deputy Commissioner of Rawalpindi when on tour. In the second article shooting of an Indian shikari by the District Officer of Rawalpindi was described as a "deliberate murder". While the Panjabee was prosecuted, no similar action was taken against the Civil and Military Gazzette which published letters that incited worse racial antagonism.[27] The proprietor of the Panjabee, Jaswant Rai, was sentenced to two years' imprisonment and the editor, Athalye, to six months' inprisonment for "fomenting race hatred".[28] Pindi Das, the editor and proprietor of the Weekly India, published from Gujranwala, had also been sentenced for publishing a letter from American containing a "seditious appeal" to the Indian troops. It was addressed to the "Men of the British Army" by "Natives of India and Afghanistan who have emigrated to America".[29] It urged them to rise against the British Government with a view to achieve Swaraj. Copies of this letter were recovered from possession of some soldiers at Mardan.[30] The prosecution and conviction of the editor and proprietor further embittered the relations between European community and Indian population.[31] These sentences provoked a riot in Lahore.[32] The house of the District Magistrate was attacked and damaged, Europeans passing by were abused and manhandled, while the released prisoners were hailed, with cries of "Bande Matram", "Death to the enemy". The tone of the prevailing atmosphere was expressed by the Vakil of Amritsar: "Indians! consider the injustice done to the Panjabee, Indians! Strike for independence. Arm yourselves and form secret societies. Seize arms and drive the tyrants from the soil of India".[33]

On April 21, 1907, a public meeting was held at Rawalpindi to protest against the Colonization Bill. It was attended by Ajit Singh the "notorious anti-British agitator", where he delivered a strong anti-British speech. The Deputy Commissioner sent a notice to three pleaders, Lala Hans Raj, Lala Amolak Ram and Lala Gurdas Ram, the organisers of the meeting, and summoned them to his court for an enquiry. A large crowd gathered at the court to express sympathy for the pleaders, and when informed that the proposed enquiry would not be held, they committed acts of rowdyism.[34] Lajpat Rai was also in Rawalpindi at that time and had consented to address a meeting before it was prohibited by the Deputy Commissioner. On May 2, 1907, disturbances again broke out at Rawalpindi where the people committed excesses. The Government arrested leaders like Hans Raj Sawhney, Gurdas Ram Sawhney, Amolak Ram, Khazan Singh and Pandit Janji Nath and many others. Most of these were Arya Samajists and legal practitioners; they had been very prominent in promoting the cause of Swadeshi and general political consciousness in and outside their areas. They were extremely popular and, therefore, "undesirable" from the Government's point of view. Altogether, the authorities brought 68 persons to trial before a special Magistrate, only six of them could be convicted.[35] The news of these arrests at Rawalpindi spread in Lahore in no time and the citizens held a protest meeting at the Bharat Mata office. After the meeting, the youngmen were intercepted by the police in Anarkali, so that they did not proceed towards Upper Mall where the quarters of the Europeans were located. The crowd refused to disperse and shouted "Bande Matram".[36] The Police worked themselves to an unusual degree of frenzy and heat and began to trample people under their horses without making the least discrimination. Many innocents were injured by the Lathis and the butt ends of their muskets. Writing about the complex situation in the Panjab Lajpat, in a strictly confidential letter to Bhai Parmanand in London, wrote: "We are passing through strange times. The people are in a sullen mood. Even the agricultural classes have begun to agitate. My only fear is that the bursting out may not be premature".[37]

In this tense situation the Government wanted to make an impressive show of force and as Gokhale said, "they struck at Lajpat Rai simply because he was the most prominent worker in the province".[38] Henry Nevinson, the noted journalist, who was in India in 1907-08, writes of his meeting with the British officer at Peshawar. When Nevinson asked the latter why a man of Lajpat Rai's character was selected for the Government's attack, the reply was, "You see, it was just because he was so good that they fired him. If he had been a rotter, they would have left him alone".[39]

The authorities grew extremely nervous. The Lieutenant Governor of Punjab felt that the situation was getting out of control and needed drastic measures. On May 3, 1907, the Governor of India received from Sir Denzil Ibbetson a weighty Minute showing that sedition was being openly preached in many towns of the Punjab at the largely attended public meetings convened by professional agitators; that the murder of high officials had been advocated; that attempts had been made to temper with the native army and the police; that the people had been incited to rise against the Government; that the Government had been charged with disseminating plague and the villagers had been urged to combine to withhold payment of Government revenue, water rates and other dues and to refuse supplies, carriage and other help to Government officers on tour.[40] In view of "persistent", "malignant" and "widespread" agitation the Lieutenant Governor requested the Government of India for "power to prevent, by executive action, the stream of seditious poison being poured into the minds of our people either by printed matter or orally".[41] Sir Denzil Ibbetson described Lajpat Rai as, "a revolutionary and a political enthusiast who had been carried away by his theories into the most intense hatred of the British Government". "Throughout the agitation", he added, "he keeps himself as far as possible in the background while engineering systematic propaganda" against the government. The Lt. Governor recognised him, "the moving spirit" of the whole agitation.[42]

Ibbetson based his Minute on C.I.D. reports of Lajpat Rai's and Ajit Singh's speeches before the peasants of Lyallpur, Multan, etc. The secret report of Police held Lajpat Rai responsible for the agitation. The officiating Director of the C.I.D., C.I. Stevenson Moore, wrote on April 7, 1907 that Ajit Singh spoke at a meeting in Lahore which was one of the most dangerous and seditious speeches where thumb impressions were taken on an agreement not to pay the enhanced canal rates. His Lahore agent informed him that Ajit Singh received one hundred rupees a month from Lajpat Rai. Lajpat Rai gave him notes for his speech and paid his expenses out of the political funds which was placed at his disposal.[43]

Ajit Singh's writings do not support official version. In his autobiography Ajit Singh writes:

> Excessive land revenue increase in Rawalpindi district, Doab Bari Act and Colonization Act provided us ground to rouse public feelings against the British rule in India especially in the Punjab and to launch a campaign of agitation and to exploit these acts for using them against the British Government. This was a means to bring about awakening and political consciousness among the public and to get these measures cancelled. I informed my elder brother, Sardar Kishan Singh, and

> L. Ghasita Ram of my intentions, and explained to them how I wanted to bring about a revolution in the Punjab and I was assured of their support. My brother was of the opinion that it would be better to enlist L.Lajpat Rai's support as also that of other prominent leaders in the Punjab. I acquiesced and commended the idea but was very doubtful whether their support would be forthcoming, but thought that there would at least be no harm in trying. My brother (S.Kishen Singh) undertook to do this and he contacted L.Lajpat Rai and informed him of our ideas and explained to him (how) awakening could be brought about in the Punjab to shake the foundations of the British Empire in India. L.Lajpat Rai did not receive the proposition well: he was afraid that this would bring suffering to and imprisonment of all prominent leaders; he considered it a rash step and me a hot-headed person. He refused to participate in the movement but promised to consider the proposal and let us know if it was feasible for him as also for us to start such a movement. In fact, he tried to discourage my brother also.[44]

The C.I.D. discovered in 1909 two letters written by Lajpat Rai in the possession of Bhai Parmanand alongwith a copy of the bomb manual used by the revolutionaries implicated in the Alipore Bomb Case. The first letter was dated February 28, 1907 in which Bhai Parmanand was asked to request Shyamji Krishna Verma to place at his (Lajpat Rai's) disposal a portion of his gift of Rs.10,000 for "political missionaries" and also to send a number of books containing "true ideas" on politics, for the use of the student community at Lahore. The second letter was dated April 11, 1907 and it stated: "The people are in sullen mood. Even the agricultural classes have begun to agitate. My only fear is that the bursting out may not be premature".[45] Between March 1 and May 1, 1907 twenty eight such meetings were held. It was alleged that at most of these meetings either Lajpat Rai or Ajit Singh or both criticised the Government's actions particularly the Colonization Bill. Sir Ibbeston also referred to another rumour that Lajpat Rai was in correspondence with the Amir of Afganistan and attempts had been made to temper with loyalty of the army.[46] Under these circumstances Ibbetson requested Minto that the warrants for their confinement under section 2 of the Regulation 111 of 1818 be issued.[47]

Minto was of the opinion that Ibbetson knew the Punjab very well and was not likely to exaggerate the situation. He was alarmed by this official information about the existence of so much sedition in Punjab. His own reaction was, "We are just now at a moment when if we act quickly, we may save a lot of trouble", and he favoured the issue of warrants at once. He did not consult Morley. "It is a matter of a few days. If we temporise and ask advice from home, things may drift from bad to worse".[48] So, trusting Ibbetson's judgement, Minto was inclined to accept his request. The question was discussed in the Executive Council. The Council had little information except for the Punjab letter and its enclosures. The Local Government had been able to support its case only with few reports of speeches, history sheets of Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh, and excerpts from district officers' correspondence. Because the Imperial C.I.D. was prevented by statute from collecting information within the areas falling under the jurisdiction of the provincial governments, the C.I.D. and the Council were virtually dependent upon the Punjab police agency for news and analysis.[49] In the emergency meeting which was called to discuss Lajpat Rai's deportation Edward Baker, a Member of the Council, distrusted Ibbetson and urged his fellow Council Members to oppose the Punjab request. Erle Richards, the Legal Member, was in favour of employing only the legal machinery "now in existence", and he was against utilizing an old act.[50] But Minto had made up his mind and he issued orders of deportation. Lajpat Rai was arrested and deported[51] without trial on May 9, 1907 and Ajit Singh on June 3, 1907, and both were sent to Mandalay, Burma. On May 11, 1907, Minto issued the Regulation of Meetings, and it was simultaneously applied to the Punjab and Eastern Bengal and Assam. He wrote to Morley that, "I believe the arrest of Lajpat Rai and the proclamation of the ordinance have done endless good in restoring public confidence".[52]

In Minto's view the reasons for the Punjab unrest were three - the 50th anniversary of the Mutiny (May 10, 1907), the Punjab Colonization Bill, and the plague. Lajpat Rai saw the whole thing in a different light. He thought that the unrest was due to the Government's unwise policies. He also believed that the riots at any rate in the district of Rawalpindi, were organised by the police with a view to arresting the popular leaders.[53]

Soon Minto realised the causes of unrest in the Punjab. He believed that the Colonization Bill was the root cause of the present unrest. The discontent it caused was, in the opinion of the Governor-General, "genuine and justifiable", and he was inclined to veto the Bill. But Sir Denzil Ibbetson was strongly opposed to disallowing the Bill on the ground that it would be a surrender to agitation and derogatory to the prestige of the Punjab Government. Minto, however, ignored the protest of the Punjab Government. Refusing his assent to the Bill, he characterised it as "a very faulty piece of legislation, legislation which would be unadvisable at any time, but which at the present moment, if it becomes law, would add fuel to the justifiable discontent which has already been caused, whilst the appearance of surrender to agitation, should any portion of the public entertain such reasoning would, in my opinion, be far less dangerous than to insist on enforcing the unfortunate legislation proposed upon a war like and loyal section of the Indian community."[54]

Commenting on unrest in Punjab and his innocence, Lajpat Rai admitted that the political storm was intensely fierce in the Punjab during the months of January and February 1907, "Public meetings were organised spontaneously and resolutions were passed against the Government. I also visited several places and addressed audiences on Swadeshi and Boycott and on patriotism".[55] The situation was diagnosed by Lajpat Rai and summed up in a communication to the Panjabee only a few hours before his arrest. The unrest, according to him, was due to the sevral causes arising out of unjust administrative and legislative measures of the Local Government. Significantly among those were the Colonization

Bill, increase of irrigation rates in the Bari Doab Canal and the abnormal increase of land revenue in Rawalpindi District.[56] In a statement, Lajpat Rai denied charges which were levelled against him. He wrote: "I deny that I ever preached or promoted sedition or that in any of my speeches I ever called the mutiny of 1857 a war of Independence or made this suggestions".[57] Lajpat Rai sent a memorandum to the Secretary of State for India from Moulemein on the 29th June 1907 in which he wrote that he had never done nor attempted to do "anything which was intended or calculated to cause commotion in any part of the dominions of His Majesty the King Emperor of India".[58]

The Arya Samaj circles in the Punjab were shocked at the heavy hand with which the Government fell upon Lajpat Rai. A deputation of their leaders waited on Ibbetson, in May 1907, to convince him that the Samaj as a body was purely socio-religious, having no connection with politics. They issued a statement which asserted that a few fanatics drawn from different classes have been preaching and writing sedition, and have brought troubles even upon those who were for constitutional agitation. In an open letter to the Civil and Military Gazette, forty-two prominent Punjabi lawyers and leaders of the Arya Samaj, including Hans Raj, declared that they "disassociated themselves from, and expressed their emphatic disapproval of, all methods of political agitation which tend to promote disloyalty, sedition, or disorder".[59] These leaders submitted:

> We as members of the Arya Samaj and as subjects of the British Government, strongly disapprove of the conduct of fanatics. It is unfortunate that Lajpat Rai and Hans Raj and Gurdas Ram – prominent members of the Arya Samaj... have been suspected of unconstitutional agitation. We believe they were advocates of constitutional agitation.[60]

Arya Samajist's conciliatory attempts had no effect on the Government. Ibbetson continued to accuse them of being members of a "seditious" body.

The deportation afforded an opportunity to the "loyalists" to once again demonstrate their loyalty.

His Highness Maharaja Sir Prabhu Narayan Singh of Benaras assured Dunlop Smith, Viceroy's Private Secretary, of his loyalty to the Raj. He said that "the entire Hindu population" approved of Government's strong measures and they had no sympathy with Lajpat Rai, Ajit Singh and the like. The Maharaja also organised a Hindu deputation to the Government.[61]

Some loyal Punjab Muslims too condemned revolutionary movement. "We condemned from the beginning all methods of popular agitation, which tend to promote disloyalty, sedition or disorder, and it is a matter of undoubted gratification for us to find the leaders of the Hindu community openly falling in with our views", commented the Observer, the leading Mohammedan paper in the Punjab.[62] The Azad and Watan published extracts from Lajpat Rai's speeches to demonstrate his guilt of sedition,[63] while a letter to the Akhbar-i-Am read, "The sooner such enemies of India are wiped out the better for the country".[64] But these were not the views of the entire Muslim population. The nationalist Muslims expressed their sympathies with Lajpat Rai. In his Story of My Deportation, Lajpat Rai wrote with pride:

> The whole country spoke like one man irrespective of caste or creed. The Mohammedan merchants of Ahmedabad and Surat gave a crushing reply to the lie circulated by the Anglo-Indian journalists that the Mohammedans were happy at my deportation and had no sympathy with me. One of the big representative gatherings of Mohammedans held in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh that was reported to have expressed satisfaction at my deportation was attended by seven men only[65].

The Anglo-Indians reaction to the agitation and to Lajpat Rai's deportation was expressed in the following letter to the Civil and Military Gazette: "We must hold the country with the power of the sword, and in the interests of our women and children and the Empire we must see that the edge of the sword is not dull. The only thing an oriental respects is power".[66] The Anglo-Indians fully supported the Government's strong measures. The Englishman commented jubilantly in the editorial, on June 20, 1907:

> Lajpat Rai and his henchmen would have come to occupy striking and commanding positions from which they would further defy the Government and pave the way for the rebellion - we use the word advisedly - which it was their desire to foment.[67]

The reaction of a large majority of people was, however, different. As the news of deportation reached from district to district and province to province, the people felt shocked and provoked, and voices full of anguish, remonstrances and warning were heard all over the country. The Indian nationalist press expressed indignation. Jan Ratan wrote: "the Swan has been carried away from the garden of India".[68] On May 15, 1907, Panjabee reported: "In certain respects an exact parallel to the deportation of Lajpat Rai is furnished by the memorable Dreyfus case of France who formed the great European sensation of about seven years ago. Like Captain Dreyfus, Lajpat Rai is a victim of ignorance on the part of the high and mighty among the rulers of the land, coupled with an eagerness on the part of certain underlings, self-seekers, time servers and political opponents to profit by the same".[69] Sandhya of Bengal wrote on very next day: "Lalaji, wherever you may be and in whatever condition, all Indians are remembering you with the greatest reverence. You are the first offering at the Mother's Yajna "(sacrifice)".[70] Patrika's correspondent from Lahore reported: "The mountain cavalary are patrolling the streets... Great sensation prevails throughout all classes of people".[71] According to the same paper consternation prevailed among the Punjabee residence of Mandalay who fasted for days together after Lajpat Rai's arrival.[72] The Hindustan reported: "To the best of its information, Government was misled into believing that Lajpat Rai was the Proprietor of the Panjabee; that he was at the bottom of the recent riots at Rawalpindi; and that Ajit Singh was the Captain of his (imaginary political) soldiers. In all probability, however, the most serious item of the information furnished to Government against him was that he was to lead one lakh of desperadoes against the Lahore Fort on the 10th instant. At all events, Government has deported him under the mistaken impression that he was author of the unrest prevalent in the Punjab and that all young men of the Punjab were ready to die at a signal from him".[73] The Swadeshi Bandhu reported: "The incident has caused feelings of intense grief not only in Punjab but throughout the country.... the adoption of such measures by Government is calculated only to deepen the unrest that prevails among the people".[74] "The hour for speeches and fine writings is past", wrote Bande Mataram, "The bureaucracy has thrown down the gauntlet. We take it up. men of the Punjab! Race of the Lion! Show these Men who would stamp you into the dust that for one Lajpat they have taken away hundered Lajpats will arise in his place. Let them hear a hundred times louder your war-cry 'Jai Hindustan".[75]

Protest meetings against deportation and to secure his release were held in the province of Lajpat Rai and in other parts of the country. On May 24, 1907, a protest meeting was held at Benares which was attended by 250 persons, chiefly Maharattas and some Bengalis.[76] Confidential report of the Government reported that on August 18, 1907, a meeting of local nationalist was held at Beharampur where Ram Ditta, a local leader, gave a speech in which he exhorted all Indians to show their sympathy with Lajpat Rai. He argued them to settle disputes among themselves and to boycott Government law courts.[77] On September 2, 1907, Lajpat Rai's father, Radha Krishan, said that until all different races living in India united, it was impossible for them to drive out the foreign rulers, but if the agitation could only be kept going they were sure to succeed.[78] On August 18, 1907, a protest meeting was held in Jhelum where a lecture was delivered by Bakshi Bhagwan Das who exhorted all members of the society to boycott foreign sugar. Funds were collected in Jullundur, Gujarat, Lahore and Benares.[79] A meeting of sympathy for Lajpat Rai was held at Allahabad.[80] A meeting was held in Ferozepur to obtain the release of Lajpat Rai, and it was urged that he should be made President of the next Congress.

It seems that the Indian railway staff at many places also protested against the deportation of Lajpat

Rai. Confidential report of the Government wrote: "Collections are being made among the staff of the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway, and some of the Station Masters and Ticket Collectors are said to pay monthly subscriptions to the fund raised in connection with Lajpat Rai's case".[81] The Government report added that "at heart the people were as disaffected as ever" though there was no outward disturbance in connection with the arrest of Lajpat Rai.[82]

The Congress condemnation of these deportations was equally strong and bitter. The Extremists as well as the Moderates joined in the protest against the deportation without affording Lajpat Rai a chance to defend himself. Karandikar writes, "Immediately on getting news of Lalaji's deportation, Tilak returned to Poona from Sinhgad. 'Lalaji deported and Minto still alive' - these words used by him off-hand on reaching Poona correctly expressed the deep and country-wide resentment, which the high-handed action of Government was bound to provoke... Mr. P.M.Bapat proposed an ultimatum to Mr. Morley demanding Lalaji's release within three months. Mr. Bapat proposed to shoot Mr. Morley dead if the ultimatum was left unheeded".[83] Tilak took a challenging posture and wrote in the Kesari, "If the rulers adopt this Russian method then the subjects in India will have to imitate the subjects in Russia. The modern histories of Russia, Germany and Ireland are booming out to us that the people's yearning or desire for Swarajya cannot be suppressed by tyranny. The time has now arrived to see whether the subjects of India are less manly than the subjects of these other countries. If we fail this test then ours will have been the lot of committing the deadly sin of putting our future generations into slavery for all times".[84] The elders of the Congress like V.K.Mahajani, Gokhale, Mudholkar and Setalvad met soon after the deportation and called the Government action "entirely unjustifiable". They declared:

> There is unanimity of opinion about the procedure adopted in regard to Lajpat Rai being entirely unjustifiable. No one conceives it possible that he was directly and indirectly engaged in plotting against the British Rule. All feel from the beginning that the cry of an incipient mutiny or an organised

> or contemplated rebellion is due partly to panic partly to the desire to create prejudice against us in England and rouse the apprehensions of the people there about the safety of the empire and the lives and property of their countrymen. Action intended to secure the release of Lajpat Rai is deemed necessary[85].

Gokhale was outraged by this disregard of due process and wrote to The Times of India to protest against the "grievous wrong" done to Lajpat Rai in:

> depriving him of his liberty without a trial and deporting him out of the country. No doubt the Police have plied the local Government with secret reports against him, but we all know the utter worthlessness of such reports in this country, especially when there is no likelihood of their correctness being tested in a Court of Law.[86]

Lajpat Rai's activities were well known to Gokhale. "Lajpat Rai is no mere dreamer", Gokhale added, "he has been all his life an earnest and practical worker, and has behind him a record of solid work of which any Indian may be proud of. He knows the limits within which political agitation must be confined if it is to be really fruitful in the present circumstances of the country, and it is inconceivable that he can have transgressed those limits."[87] Gokhale considered Lajpat Rai as "constitutional" leader and nearer to his vision. He wrote:

> Again and again he (Lajpat Rai) and I have discussed our aims, our hopes, our methods of work and there never has been any substantial difference of opinion between us. His language was at times a trifle strong - this must necessarily be a matter of temperament - but his aims and methods have always been strictly constitutional and I refuse to believe, unless clear evidence to the contrary is forthcoming, that he could ever have done anything that could in any way constitute a justification for the action of the Government.[88]

Gokhale was fully convinced that Lajpat Rai was not a revolutionary. He exerted all the influence he had to get deportation order rescinded. He wrote the following letter to the Private Secretary of the Viceroy: "To bracket Ajit Singh with Lajpat Rai is monstrous injustice to the latter. When I was in Lahore in February last, Ajit Singh had already begun to denounce Lajpat Rai as a coward and pro-Government man, because Lajpat Rai would have nothing to do with Ajit Singh's propaganda".[89] The Government believed that Ajit Singh was in the pay of Lajpat Rai. But it appears that Lajpat Rai had stopped making such payments for Ajit Singh had not observed "certain conditions" attached to the payment.[90] Presumably these "certain conditions" pertained to the method of conducting political struggle. Lajpat Rai's approach was peaceful and constitutional whereas Ajit Singh was a revolutionary. Gokhale had also a talk with Dunlop Smith, the Private Secretary of Minto. The gist of this talk was that Gokhale virtually begged for the early release of Lajpat Rai and as far Ajit Singh, he said, he might rot in "Jehannum" (hell).[91] In the Council Chamber, Gokhale made an outspoken comment on the deportation. He said:

> The whole country was convulsed, and while the Punjab itself was paralysed, in other parts of India even the most level-headed men found it difficult to express themselves with due self-restraint. That a man like Lala Lajpat Rai, loved by thousand, not in his own province only, a man of high character and of elevated feeling, a keen religious and social reformer, and a political worker who, whatever his faults, worked only in broad daylight, should have been suddenly arrested and deported without trial, this was a proceeding which stunned the people throughout India.[92]

He then urged Wedderburn to stimulate "energetic action on the part of Indian friends in England". He added: "We must not rest till we have secured Lajpat Rai's restoration to liberty".[93]

Lajpat Rai's friends and relatives in Lahore were very much upset with his deportation. Dwarka Das, Pleader, Ambala City, earnestly requested to Gokhale to rescue Lajpat Rai "from the damp and comparatively unhealthy climate of Mandlay". He gave three suggestions to Gokhale thus: "One way to do it is by putting a solicitor in correspondence with the Government all about his health, his comforts, the suitability of the climate, etc. The other is by sending a memorial signed by leading men in every province to the Government. The third is an appeal to the Home Government through the Secretary of State".[94]

The Congress of 1907 and 1908 denounced the Regulation 111 of 1818. In 1908, the Congress demanded the repeal of this Regulation and urged that the deported persons be brought to trial. Tej Bahadur Sapru and Syed Husein Imam, two prominent lawyers and moderate leaders, spoke against this Regulation and declared that its spirit was against the basic principles of English jurisprudence and inconsistent with the tradition of the English constitution. Motilal Nehru considered Lajpat Rai as the "most prominent man in the Punjab" and he said that he was arrested "simply with the object of over aweing the people".[95] Reacting sharply in Bande Mataram on May 11, 1907, at the deportation of Lajpat Rai, Aurobindo Ghosh wrote:

> The pomp and prestige of its irresistible might, the tram of its armies and the terror of its guns, the slow mercilessness of its penal law and the swift fury of its arbitrary statue have all been gathered round two small cities, not to put down a formidable rebellion or effect the capture of dangerous military leaders, but to arrest a few respectable and unwarlike pleaders and barristers.

In his editorals in Bande Mataram, Auronbindo advised his countrymen thus:

> The hour for speeches and fine writings is past. The bureaucracy has thrown the gaunlet. We take it up. Men of the Punjab! Roar of the Lion! Show these men who would stampt you into the dust that for one Lajpat Rai they have taken away, hundred Lajpats will arise in his place. Let them hear a hundred times louder your war cry "Jai-Hindustan".[96]

Sister Nivedita was shocked to hear the news of Lajpat Rai's deportation without trial. On the day of the deportation, she wrote in her private diary, "Is the Government Crazy"?[97] Poet Subramaniya Bharathi commemorated the event in his composition Lajpatiyin Prlabham.[98]

No less was the impact outside India. The "mini India" in India House was stunned. Its occupants trembled with anger and thirsted for revenge. As for Shyamji, his heart bled. For Lalaji - the Lion of Punjab - was, in a way, only towering leader in India with whom Shyamji had developed the most friendly relations in London, and with whom he continued to correspond till nearly the time of his arrest. In the very next issue, the June Number of his paper, he wrote groaning with grief:

> To us personally the sudden disappearance of Lajpat Rai from the field of operations in India under such painful circumstances has given a shock which we cannot describe in words. On almost the very day of his arrest we received a high pathetic letter from him imploring us to do all in our power to bring the Panjabee case to the notice of the British public and the foreign press. Little did he think when he penned that letter that in less than three weeks he would be arrested and deported under a cruel and oppressive regulation by the so called civilized Government of India.[99]

After a passing reference to Lalaji's speech at the opening of India House in July 1905 (of which he was the occupant) Shyamji warned the bureaucracy thus:

> The deportation of Lalaji is an event which in our opinion is the forerunner of the downfall of British Rule in India.[100]

At a meeting of the Indians to protest against the British action in invoking Regulation 111, young Indians rallied against the concept of achieving anything "through mere wordy agitations and resolutions" when an Indian's "primary rights could at anytime be trampled underfoot in such high-handed fashion and the most popular demands on constitutional lines, were thus, met by throwing all laws and constitutions to the wind".[101]

Tremors of shock and indignation felt in Paris were no less intense. On May 11, 1907, the very next day after Lalaji's deportation, the Indian community in Paris convened an urgent meeting to condemn "the very despotic action of the British Government in deporting Lalaji from Lahore without giving him a trial", and to congratulate at the same time "the patriot on his great and glorious sacrifices in the service of his country".[102]

Madam Cama, popularly known as the "Mother of Indian Revolution" and the "Indian Joan of Arc" was holding the Paris front almost as unflinchingly as Shyamji in London. After the meeting she made a moving appeal to her countrymen in India and abroad:

> I was shocked to hear that one of us, Mr. Lajpat Rai, a true patriot, was snached away from his hearth and home and became a prisoner. Do not depend upon the promises of foreign rulers, because they are in India not for the purpose of aiding you but they are there for fleecing you.
>
> Men and women of India... resent this atrocities. Make up your mind that the whole population should rather perish than live in such slavery...
>
> We are burning with age at the gross injustice and I wonder how anyone in his senses can expect us to take it lying down. I wish I could break open the very prison doors and bring out Lajpat Rai... Lajpat, the patriot, should not be left to breathe the foul air of captivity. For he who loses his liberty loses his virtue... let us combine. If we all speak bravely like Lajpat Rai how many forts and prisons must they build before it can deport or confine us all... we are three hundred million strong. It is only unity we require....[103]

In England, Lajpat Rai's deportation evoked public discussion and led to heated debate in the House of Commons. Questions were asked by the radical and Irish members about the reasons for Government's action and the cause of this unrest. Dr. V.H.Rutherford, J.O.'Grady, William Redmond, Sir Henry Cotton, C.J.O'

Donnell, and others asked searching questions to find out the real reasons for Lajpat Rai's deportation. They even pressed the Government to charge him and try him in a Court of Law. H.C.Lea asked whether there was any other place under the British flag where these letters de cachet obtained as they did in India.[104] Such questions were asked frequently and Morley first evaded direct answers but then he made a statement on June 6, 1907. He justified the Government's action and based his speech on Ibbetson's minute. Though he did not enumerate the charges against Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh, he suggested that the unrest in the Punjab was caused more by their speeches than by any agrarian grivances. This remained the Government's explanation for some time. The Government did not publicly admit that the agrarian grievances were the main cause of unrest in the Punjab in spite of the fact that Minto vetoed the Colonization Bill. On June 18, 1907, F.C.Mackarness then asked whether Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh were entitled to appeal to the Governor-General and whether they had availed themselves of this opportunity. Morley replied in the affirmative to the first part of the query but in the negative to the second.[105]

The inside story of Lajpat Rai's arrest, as revealed in the confidential records of the Government of India, also deserves notice here, because it serves to disclose the thinking of official mind at different levels. The Lieutenant-Governor of Punjab alleged, "Lajpat Rai's avowed object is to tamper with native troops."[106] Two Members of the Viceroy's Council, namely H.E. Richards and E.N.Baker, regarded Lajpat Rai as a moderate and "constitutional" leader and they drew the attention of the Lieutenant-Governor to the following facts about him:

> Lajpat Rai has attended a few meetings only: his speeches have been much more moderate and he is a member of a society of Moderates whose policy is to proceed by constitutional agitation... His arrest will cause the more commotion... and will call Mr. Gokhale and his followers to arms and possibly set against us a party which ostensibly at least is on our side. The case against Lajpat Rai is practically one of suspicion...[107]

These views written on May 5, 1907, four days before the arrest, were set aside by other Members of the Council and also by the Viceroy. Although all the Members of the Viceroy's Council were aware that Lajpat Rai's arrest would "undoubtedly give rise to troublesome agitation",[108] yet they issued the orders of deportation.

Lady Minto's account of Minto's attitude to Lajpat Rai gives an erroneous impression.[109] She implies that Minto thought Lajpat Rai to be "the head and centre of the entire movemnt" that excited "discontent among the agricultural classes" and tampered "with the loyalty of the army".[110] But this was Ibbetson's view point and not Minto's. Minto first took Ibbetson's view at their face value and did not ask for more details. If had done so, it would have meant that he had no faith in the Lieutenant-Governor whom he treated as an expert on Punjab affairs. Minto trusted Ibbetson's judgement so completely that the Government of India before issuing orders for the arrest of Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh did not even try to find out the whereabouts of the two. It was believed that Ibbetson knew their whereabouts and it would be easy to arrest them. This, however, was not the case as it took a long time before Ajit Singh was arrested.

But later the Viceroy revised his stand. He began to feel that Punjab Government had asked for the deportation of the two leaders on meagre evidence. As he said:

> I am bound to say the information on which the Punjab Government asked us to take immediate action seemed to me weak, when I became acquainted with it.[111]

Minto also began to feel that Lajpat Rai was a moderate and constitutional leader, and he never attempted to tamper with the loyalty of the troops. He was inclined to release him at the earliest. He wrote to the Secretary of State thus: "There is nothing whatever that I know of to justify his assertion that one of Lajpat Rai's main objects is to tamper with the loyalty of the Indian Army. I have never seen any evidence in support of this. Ibbetson appears to me to entirely misunderstand the position. He appears to assume that we can stamp out the unrest. This we can never do. It has come to stay, in the shape of new ideas and aspirations of which every one who has thought seriously over the subject ought to be aware. He confuses this with sedition which we are absolutely determined to put down". Minto was actually convinced that "Lajpat Rai is undoubtedly a man of high character and very much respected by his fellow countrymen, and if when I was asked to arrest him, I had known what I do now, I should have required much more evidence before agreeing. Ajit Singh is of much lower standing in every way and I shall regret associating them in their release".[112] Thus, Minto admitted that the Government's action was hasty, unjustified and based on slender evidence.

The widerspread criticism on Lajpat Rai's deportation forced the Government to avoid such extreme action. For example, the Governor of Madras, Arthur Lawley demanded the deportation of B.C.Pal, who was then on a visit to South India. But Viceroy Minto replied to Arthur Lawley:

> I am in full sympathy with your wish to deport Bipin Chandra Pal. I wish we had done it long ago, but i see no chance now of doing it, as they are getting anxious at home as to the measures we are taking, and though Morely had backed me up well, the deportation of Lajpat Rai has raised a storm of criticism which he will have to face at home.[113]

Morley, in the beginning, supported Minto's action in deporting Lajpat rai and Ajit Singh, but soon afterwards he became impatient. He, in fact, was never quite happy about this deportation. It weighed heavily on the conscience of Secretary of State for India. He called it "a wholly exceptional measure so alien to deeply rooted political habits of mind and established maxims of Government in this country...."[114] Morley was conscious of tne opinion of his radical supporters and of the fact that his "Tory opponents will scent inconsistency between deporting Lajpat Rai and my fighting of Balfour for locking up William O'Brien".[115] Then, he could not disregard the opinion of the British

House of Commons which was overwhelmingly liberal. He wrote to Minto, "I beseech you not to lose sight of the indisputable fact that - provided things are quiet in India - it will be impossible for me to face the House of Commons in January, if the two men are still under lock and key. It has been a pretty stiff strain this session, and indefinite detention won't be stood much further".[116] Recalling his role in the happenings Sir C.Sanakaran Nair wrote:

> I did what was in my power to induce the India office to put pressure on the Viceroy to change the attitude. There was an order by Lord Morley after the arrest of Lajpat Rai to Mr. Ibbetson, the Lt. Governor of Punjab, that in future no such arrest should be made and no proceedings should be taken against such alleged offenders without the sanction of the Viceroy. It was for this reason that Lord Willington in Madras, and Lord Lloyd in Bombay were not allowed to proceed against Gandhi .[117]

And finally, on October 30, 1907, the Secretary of State sent the following telegram to the Viceroy: "Private. Release of Lajpat Rai. I venture to urge upon you to make passing of Meetings Act the occasion for releasing Lajpat Rai".[118] Minto gladly accepted this advice for he had already revised his opinion about Lajpat Rai and he, too, was in favour of his release. Consequently, the two deported leaders were released on November 18, 1907 despite the strong opposition of Sir Denzil Ibbetson.[119]

Lajpat Rai's release[120] was a turning point in his political life. It gave great impetus to his popularity. Public meetings were held in many parts of India to congratulate him on his release. According to an official report, "the celebration of the anniversary of the Arya samaj commenced on November 29, 1907. A very large crowd gathered to hear Lajpat Rai's speech since his return (from Mandalay). He spoke... for two hours. He referred to his deportation. He assured the hearers that he had worked for the Swaraj for twenty five years and would always help it. I cannot leave the Church in which I believe and to which I owe so much". My hopes and ideas are the same, which I held six months back. The present time is not of criticism... but of embracing each other. Take each other's hand and walk side by side".[121] On December 6, 1907, a public meeting held at Bradlaugh Hall, Lahore, in which Lajpat Rai said that these six months had made absolutely no change in his political views. They were not deterred by the occurance of recent events.[122] Beside others, it was attended by Fazal Ilahi and Obeidullah, leaders of the New Muhammaden Party of the Punjab.[123]

The Indian students in London and elsewhere in Britain who had earlier reacted strongly to Lajpat's deportation welcomed his release. In London, a Lajpat Rai Memorial Fund was raised. In this connection Indian students in Britain passed on donations to Hardayal, who wrote to his brother at Delhi asking him to see if clay modles of Lajpat Rai could be made and sold at Diwali festival at Delhi.[124] On hearing the news of release of the two leaders, there was jubliation at Delhi. The students of St. Stephen's college asked for a holiday in honour of the event.[125] Telegrams of congratulations were sent to the two leaders, and they were invited to visit the city. Here some people decided to construct a statue in honor of Lajpat Rai. One person donated his whole property to him. Another donated his gold chain.[126]

On his return to Lahore, Lajpat Rai filed a suit in the Calcutta High Court against the Englishman (Calcutta). Bhupendra Nath Basu Attorney-at-Law was arranged for the case.[127] Gokhale, through his private correspondence, also supported Lajpat Rai's case.[128] The September 10, 1907, issue of the paper had held Lajpat Rai guilty of tampering with the loyalty of Punjab Sepoys and had written that "the very virtues of Lajpat Rai only make him more dangerous and it is the half-religious, half-political fanatics of this half-sane, half mad brand that are always the most dangerous conspirators". Mr. Justice Flatcher of the Calcutta High Court, who heard the case held the statement to be a malicious libel upon him and awarded him damages amounting to Rs.15,000. Besides, the defendents had to apologise.[129] In a similar defamation case against a paragraph which appeared in the issue of the Daily Express (London) of July 16, 1907,[130] he was awarded £ 50 as damages.

To sum up, the Punjab was in ferment in 1906 and 1907 largely on account of various unjust administrative measures of the Government. The political consciousness among the people was also growing. The Local Government took repressive steps and decided to deport Lajpat Rai. Despite opposition within the Viceroy's Council, Minto trusted the Lieutenant-Governor of Punjab and issued orders of his deportation without making a deep study of the situation. Lajpat Rai was not given an opportunity to defend himself. His deportation was severely criticised by the Indians nationalist press, congress leaders, Railway employees and meetings were held in several parts of the country to protest against the deportation. Soon Minto realised the hollowness of Ibbetson's Minute and being impressed by the great popularity of Lajpat Rai decided to release him.

The deportation gave Lajpat Rai the halo of martyrdom, and he returned from Mandalay as a great national hero. He was at the height of his popularity, and his name was put forward by the Nationalists led by Tilak for the presidentship of 1907 Congress to be held at Surat. It raised him in the estimation of his appreciative countrymen as he proved his worth and stamina as a popular leader.

The deportation of Lajpat Rai without any trial drove one conclusive lesson into the minds of the people. The lesson was that constitutional agitation even by the most responsible public men was not possible. Consequently, this development encouraged the Extremists and revolutionaries to renew their activities with greater vigour. Men like Ajit Singh in Punjab became more active and influential. Here a number of revolutionary groups and societies came into existence. Similarly, in Bengal the deportation had the effect of stiffering the backs of younger generation and giving fillip to revolutionary activities.

The six months' imprisonment of Lajpat Rai gave a new dimension to Indian nationalism. The constitutional leaders who had pinned their hopes and expectations on the Government began to lose ground in the country because of this stunning blow. The repressive dose on the part of the Government evoked strongest protest in various parts of the country. In such conditions the Moderates' beliefs and ideology received a set-back, and the people now became more receptive to radical and revolutionary preachings. Viewed in this context, Lajpat Rai's deportation lent new energy, dynamism and force to India nationalism.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The Medical College was established in 1860, Forman Christian College in 1866, the Government College in 1888. There were, two 'denominational' colleges of Indian origin. The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College was set up in 1888 by the Arya Samaj; the Islamia College by the Anjuman-in-Hinayat-i-Islam in 1892. See R.Kumar's (ed.), *Essays on Gandhian Politics* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 245-46.

2. B. 1824; d. 1884.

3. Heimsath, C.H,, *Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform* (Princeton, 1964), pp. 113-30, 292-308.

4. Tandon, P., *Punjabi Century 1857-1947* (London, 1961), p. 33.

5. *The Tribune*, February 19, 1895, January 2, 1896.

6. Our India.

7. Request of Nightingale.

8. A glimpse of Ram Chander.

9. *The Tribune*, February 8, 1907.

10. Lajpat Rai, *The Story of My Deportation* (Lahore, 1908), p. 11.

11. Letter, January 21, 1907, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, *Gokhale Papers*.

12. *PLC*, October 25, 1906.

13. *Ibid*, February 28, 1907.

14. *Ibid*.

15. *Ibid*.

16. *Zamindar*, March 8, 1907, *PNNR*. *The Tribune* was almost silent on the bill on account of pro-British shift in the policy of the paper and differences of the new editor with Lajpat Rai.

17. *Panjabee*, March 9, 1907.

18. Ibid., March 27, 1907.

19. *Khalsa Advocate*, June 5, 1907.

20. Letter, Gokhale to the Editor of the *Times of India*, May 21, 1907, *Gokhale Papers*.

21. The districts in which new land revenue assessment was sanctioned since the beginning of 1904 were: Attock, increase 25 per cent; Jang; increase 48 per cent; Rawalpindi, increase 25 per cent; The Hafizabad Tehsil in the Gujranwala district, increase 31 per cent - Telegram May 13, 1907, Viceroy to Secretary of State, *Minto Papers*.

22. Letter, Gokhale to the editor of the *Times of India*, May 21, 1907, *Gokhale Papers*. Approximately 30,000 Sikhs (23 per cent of the army) and 18,000 Punjab Muslims (13 per cent of the army) were in the army in 1907. Statistics from *Indian Army List*, 1907.

23. Nevinson, H.W., *The New Spirit in India* (London, 1908), p. 30.

24. Letter, 7 August 1907, Minto to Morley, *Minto Papers*.

25. Nevinson, H.W., *op. cit.*, p. 30.

26. Ibid.

27. Sir Denzil Ibbeston, Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, admitted that the prosecution of the Panjabee was a blunder and that the Civil and Military Gazette incited worse racial hatred. Home Department, G.O.I. Minute Progs. 7590, April 30, 1907. Minto also admitted that some letters which appeared in the Civil and Military Gazette "were disgracefully low in tone, just the sort of thing to stir up racial hatred. The Punjab Government decided not to prosecute and would not allow private prosecution. They may have been right, but it makes one's blood boil to know that a leading English newspaper could publish such productions". Vide Mary Countess of Minto, India: Minto and Morley, p. 123.

28. Nevinson, H.W., op. cit., p. 30.

29. Home Department, G.O.I. (Pol.) July-December 1907, p. 7590.

30. Letter, Gokhale to the Editor of The Times of India, May 21, 1907, Gokhale Papers.

31. Ibid.

32. P.N.N.R; Vakil, March 7, 1907. See also letter, February 28, 1907, Lajpat Rai to Parmanand vide Home Department (Political-B) Nos. 25/26 January 1910.

33. P.N.N.R;Vakil, March 7, 1907.

34. Letter, Gokhale to the Editor of the Times of India, May 21, 1907, Gokhale Papers.

35. The Punjab Government, Letter No. 14-SB, dated January 3, 1908, Vide Home Department (Pol.-A), G.O.I.. Progs. 64-72 of January, 1908 (Confidential).

36. P.N.N.R., Amrita Bazar Patrika, May 8, 1907.

37. Letter, April 11, 1907, Lajpat Rai to Bhai Parmanand, vide Home Department, G.O.I. (Poll-B), Nos. 25-26, January, 1907.

38. Letter, Gokhale to the editor of The Times of India, May 21, 1907, Gokhale Papers.

39. Nevinson, H.W., op. cit., p. 303.

40. Minute, Sir Denzil Ibbetson, April 30, 1907, enclosure to letter May 3, 1907, Government of Punjab to the Govt. of India vide G.O.I., Home Department (Poll.) Progs. August 1907, No. 148-235.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid.

43. Home Department, G.O.I.(Poll.), Nos. 44-56, December, 1907.

44. Pardaman Singh and J.S.Dhanki (ed.), Buried Alive: Autobiography, Speeches and writings of An Indian Revolutionary, Sardar Ajit Singh, (New Delhi, 1984), pp. 33-34.

45. Home Department (Political-B), Nos. 25/26 January, 1910.

46. Minute by Ibbetson, Home Department, G.O.I. (Poll) Progs. 7590, April, 1907.

47. Letter from the Punjab Govt. to the Indian Government, vide Home Department, G.O.I. (Poll.), No. 695. April-May 30, 1907.

48. Letter, May 5, 1907, Minto to Kitchener, Minto Papers.

49. Home Department, G.O.I. (Public/Poll. A) August, 1907, Nos. 148-235.

50. Letter, May 5, 1907, Minto to Kitchener, Minto Papers.

51. Lajpat Rai was asked if he cared to leave any letters, he gladly availed himself of the offer. Of the two he wrote straightway, one was addressed to his friend Dwarka Das and in this he desired that a few briefs that he was leaving behind should be properly attended to, very firmly instructing that in case the client be offered the option of leaving his fees back, if the arrangements made did not satisfy him. He enclosed the wad of currency notes he was carrying in his pocket, but when he learned that he could keep the money on him, it took it back, adding a postscript to that effect. The letter concluded by asking the friend not to be anxious for him at all, as he was in God's hands and whatever he did was for the best. The other letter was addressed to Pyarelal, the only one of his children at Lahore. This "only communicated the fact of my arrest with a wish that in my absence, he was to obey and to console my father and look to his comforts".

52. On the day of arrest, Lajpat Rai writes: "On being informed that two gentlemen wanted me outside I went out to receive them and found Lala Ganga Ram, Inspector, Anarkali Police, and Munshi Rahmat Ullah, Inspector, City Police. The latter said that the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner wanted me, but that they could not say why and for what purpose. As I knew that the Commissioner of Lahore had been sending for different people to seek their intercession to allay the prevailing unrest, my first thought was that I was also sent for with the same object and I told Inspector Rahmat Ullah that I had some business in Court and would see the Commissioner on my return. The Inspector, however, said that the Commissioner was at the District Office and wanted me for a few minutes, after which I could go to Court... My carriage was just passing out of the gate when I saw Mr. Rundle, District superintendent, Police, coming towards my house. Almost simultaneously I saw another European Officer also coming in the same direction. Both jumped on the steps of my carriage and I was no longer in doubt about the object of the police visit. On arriving there I

was told by the Commisioner Mr. Younghusband, that I had been arrested in pursuance of a warrant issued by the Governor-General in Coucil, who have decided to deport me". Vide Lajpat Rai, The Story of My Deportation, (Lahore, 1908), pp. 31-33.

53. Lajpat Rai: The Story of My Deportation (Lahore, 1908), pp. 1-20.

54. Viceroy's order, enclosure to letter, May 27, 1907, Dunlop Smith to Maclagan, Chief Secretary, Punjab, Minto Papers.

55. Lajpat Rai, Autobiographical Writings, p. 115.

56. The Panjabee, May 11, 1907.

57. "Statement of Lajpat Rai", undated, Gokhale Papers.

58. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political-A) No. 148-235, August, 1907.

59. The Civil and Military Gazette (Lahore), June 11, 1907.

60. Ibid.

61. Minto Papers, letter and telegrams, 1907, Vol. I, No. 259, Maharaja of Benaras to Dunlop Smith, may 29, 1907, vide Das, M.N., India Under Morley and Minto (London, 1964), p. 110.

62. The Civil and Military Gazette (Lahore) June 28, 1907.

63. Ibid.

64. P.N.N.R., Akhbar-i-Am, August 6, 1907.

65. Ibid.

66. Civil and Military Gazette (Lahore), June 12, 1907.

67. P.C.Ghosh, Indian National Congress (Calcutta,

1960), p. 192.

68. *B.N.N.R Sandhya*, May 10, 1907.

69. *The Panjabee*, May 15, 1907.

70. *B.N.N.R. Sandhya*, May 10, 1907.

71. *Ibid*. *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, May 10, 1907.

72. *Ibid*.

73. *P.N.N.R. Hindustan*, May 17, 1907.

74. *Ibid*. *The Swadeshi Bandhu*, May 20, 1907.

75. Hirendranath Mukherjee, *India's Struggle for Freedom* (Calcutta, 1964), p. 58.

76. *Department of Home* (Poll-B), October 1907, Nos. 40-49.

77. *Ibid*.

78. *Ibid*.

79. *Ibid*.

80. Letter, May 1, 1907, Motilal Nehru to Jawaharlal, *Jawaharlal Nehru Papers*.

81. *Home Department, G.O.I.* (Political-B), No. 40-49, October 1907.

82. *Ibid*.

83. S.L.Karandikar, *Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak: The Hercules and Prouretheus of Modern India* (Poona n.d.), pp. 242-43.

84. *The Kesari*, May 21, 1907, quoted in Stanley A. Wolpert, *Tilak and Gokhale* (Berkeley, 1962), p. 204.

85. Letter, May 1907, Madhalkar to V.Krishnaswamy

Iyiar, Iyiar Papers.

86. Letter, Gokhale to the Editor of The Times of India, May 21, 1907, Gokhale Papers.

87. Ibid.

88. Ibid.

89. Department of Home, G.O.I. (Poll.), Deposit, December, 1907.

90. Lajpat Rai, Autobiographical writings, p. 119.

91. Ibid.

92. O'Donnell, C.J.O., M.P., The Cause of Present Discontent in India, (London, 1908), p. 102.

93. Letter, Gokhale to Wedderburn, May 24, 1907, Gokhale Papers.

94. Letter, Dwarka Das to Gokhale, Lahore, August 16, 1907, Gokhale Papers.

95. Letter, May 17, 1907, Motilal Nehru to Jawaharlal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru Papers.

96. Quoted in Hirendranath Mukherjee, op. cit., p. 59.

97. Pravrajika Atmaprana, Sister Nivedita of Ramkrishna-Vivekanad (Calcutta, 1964), p. 208.

98. K.K.Gangadharan (ed.), Indian national Consciousness: Growth and Development (New Delhi, 1972), p. 73.

99. Indian Sociologist, June, 1907(London).

100. Ibid.

101. Emily C.Brown, Hardayal, Hindu Revolutionary and Rationalist (New Delhi, 1975), pp. 35-36.

102. Ibid.

103. Harindra Srivastava, *Fine Stormy Years: Savarkar in London June 1906-June 1911* (New Delhi, 1983), pp. 54-56.

104. *Hansard, House of Commons*, 4 Vol., 174, Col. 1634 (1907).

105. Morley to Minto, August 23, 1907, Telegrams, October 30, November 2, 1907, *Hansard, 4S*, Vol. 174, Lajpat Rai knew from the beginning that his imprisonment would not be for very long; that his friends in Parliament would try to secure his release. He wrote in his *Story of My Deportation* that he decided to petition to the Government of India against his detention after he had learnt that a question in Parliament had been asked about his petition, p. 199.

106. *Home Department, G.O.I.* (Political-A), Progs. 4-7 of November, 1907.

107. Vide *Home Department, G.O.I.* (Public and Pol. A), Progs. 148-235 of August, 1907 (Confidential).

108. *Ibid*.

109. Mary, Countess of Minto, *op. cit*., p. 124.

110. *Ibid*.

111. *Home Department, G.O.I.* (Poll.-A), Progs. 104-11 of May 1908.

112. Letter, November 5, 1907, Minto to Morley, *Minto Papers*.

113. M.N.Das, *India Under Morley and Minto* (London, 1964), p. 133. Also see Stephen E.Koss, *John Morley at the India Office*: 1905-1910, (London, 1969), p. 163.

114. Letter, August 23, 1907, Morley to Minto, *Minto Papers*.

115. William O'Brien (1851-1928), the Irish nationalist

leader, was convicted in 1887 on a charge of conspiracy to intimidate tenants to refuse to pay their rents and sent to jail for six months. A.J.Balfour was Secretary for Ireland. Morley put up a strong fight for his release.

116. Letter, August 23, 1907, Morley to Minto, Minto Papers.

117. Autobiography of Sir C.Sankaran Nair (Madras, 1966), p. 396.

118. Ibid.

119. Telegram, November 2, 1907, Lieutenant-Governor, Punjab to Minto, Minto Papers.

120. Ibid., November 1907, The Commissioner of Lahore added a warning to Lajpat Rai on behalf of the Viceroy that in case he was again found guilty of sedition, he would be arrested and immediately deported.

121. Home Department, G.O.I. (Poll), Deposit Nos. 7, November, 1908.

122. Ibid., December 14, 1907.

123. Home Department, G.O.I. (Poll.B) Nos. 19-26, January 1908, The Tribune, 8 December, 1907, pp. 4-5.

124. Abhyndaya (Pryag), December 20, 1907, Roll I, Jayakar Papers.

125. Home Department, G.O.I. (Poll.-B) No. 19-26, January 1908.

126. Abhyndaya (Pryag), December 20, 1907, Roll I, Jayankar Papers.

127. Before the release of Lajpat Rai, his son, Lala Pyarelal, had arranged B.N.Basu for the case. See. Letter, August 31, 1907, B.N. Basu to Lajpat rai, Home Department, G.O.I. (Poll.-A), No. 4-7,

November 1907.

128. See Letter, 28 January, 31 February, May 28, July 9, 1908, Lajpat Rai to Gokhale, G.K.Gokhale Papers.

129. Home Department, G.O.I. (Poll.-B), Nos. 65-75, August, 1909.

130. Letter, August 31, 1907, B.N.Basu to Lajpat Rai, Home Department, G.O.I. (Poll.-A), No.4-7, November, 1907.

Chapter 4

SOJOURN ABROAD, 1915-1919

The activities of Lajpat Rai in Britain, United States and Japan form a brilliant chapter in the freedom movement of India during the period of World War I. His views and methods of work were different from those Indian revolutionaries who had migrated to foreign countries in the beginning of twentieth century in search of greater safety and better opportunities to work for India's freedom. He was not in agreement with those revolutionaries and terrorists who had aligned themselves with Germany against British Indian Government. He wanted to place the Indian case before the people of foreign countries through writings, press and other constitutional means. By his powerful writings and efforts to win the support of the foreign people he gave new dimensions to nationalistic activities outside India. As a result of his new style of work abroad, the British Government was alarmed and they considered him "a very active and harmful publicist".[1]

Lajpat Rai had visited England thrice (1905, 1908-9 and 1910) before 1914 as a delegate of the Indian National Congress. The Indian National Congress held in December 1913 had decided to send a delegation to represent the views of the Congress on the question of the reform of India Council, for which a bill was to be introduced by the Secretary of State for India in the British Parliament. The Bill aimed at the reform of the India Office at Whitehall. The delegates were also to project Indian views on the South African question, the Press Act and the separation of Judicial and Executive functions. Lajpat Rai joined the delegation as representative[2] of the Punjab and reached London in May, 1914.

In London, during his stay after the rejection of Crew's Bill, Lajpat Rai engaged himself in pleading India's case before the English people. He occupied himself with the work of writing for the press on Indian matters, interviewing the Under Secretary of State for India, journalists and newsmen about the affairs of India. The Liberal and Labour Press published his articles and letters.[3] Other Indian delegates, Sarojini Naidu and Mohammed Ali Jinnah too organised meetings and delivered lectures to place the question of Indian self-government before the British people. In a meeting Lajpat Rai and Sarojini Naidu said: "India does not desire to shatter her allegiance to the Crown, but she passionately desires the removel of the laws which cramp and fetter her; she demands self-government within Empire, and she is resolute to win it".[4]

In England, Lajpat rai raised the question of the miserable conditions of Indians living in Canada. The position of Indians in the Dominions in general and in Canada in particular was one of the burning question of the day in May, June and July 1914. Canada, with a view to prevent the entry of Indians, had greatly tightened immigration laws. It had been brought into prominence by Baba Gurdit Singh's enterprise in taking "a shipload of Hindus" to the shores of Canada in a ship especially chartered for the purpose, with a view to test the legality of the immigration rules of British Columbia which denied admittance to Indians unless they had travelled to Canada in the same ship directly from India. He had chartered a Japanese ship, Komagata Maru, and took about 500 Indians, mostly Sikhs, to Canada. They were not allowed to disembark, and a strict guard was posted in the coastal sea and on the shore to prevent the landing of any of the passangers. On reaching England Lajpat Rai raised the question about Komagata Maru espisode. He met Charles Roberts, Under Secretary of State, and other persons and sought their intervention.[5] Referring to Komagata Maru, Lajpat Rai writes: "I interviewed the important editors and also wrote to the press pointing out the dangers of the policy and the impropriety of the Dominion Government's stand".[6] The writings of Lajpat Rai attracted the attention of Henry Bourassa, a Canadian parliamentarian and sympathetic to India. On 25 June, 1914, he wrote to Lajpat Rai the following lines:

> As you may have been informed by Mr. Charles Roberts, Under Secretary of State for India, I take a deep interest in Indian matters, even apart from the acute difficulty existing at present between our respective countries (I am from Canada). I have read with much interest and sympathy the two letters of yours which appeared in New Leader of the 11th and 12th instant and I would be delighted to have a conversation with you on the growth of nationalism in India... We would then go and have lunch together at some quiet place and compare facts and sentiments as between nationalism in India and nationalism in Canada.[7]

Lajpat Rai met Henry Bourassa and they discussed the question of Indian immigration to Canada. The Canadian leader was sympathetic to the problem of the Indians in Canada and he threw the whole responsibility of anti-Asiatic policy of the Dominion on the British.[8]

In Britain, Lajpat Rai made strenuous exertions to persuade the British Government to exercise their legal as well as moral authority on the Canadian Government for the purpose of permitting Komagata Maru passengers to land. But "All our efforts in England", writes Lajpat Rai, "failed to bring any relief to the Komagata Maru victims of British Imperialism".[9]

Thus, Lajpat Rai championed the cause of Indian settlers abroad and fought against racism and discrimination in the Empire.

In August 1914, the Great War broke out when Lajpat Rai was on the point of starting for Switzerland for rest.[10] He did not expect to be away from India for more than six months but the War completely upset his plans. Under the pretext of War, he was forbidden from returning to India. He, therefore, settled down in London and engaged himself in writing his book, the Arya Samaj. After completing his book, he decided to leave for the United States hoping that it might be possible to go to India via Japan.[11]

Lajpat Rai sailed from England on November 14, and reached New York City on November 21, 1914 by S.S.Philadelphia. As a staunch nationalist, he was nurtured on the ideas that America was the freest of all the countries of the world, where equality, liberty and fraternity reigned and where people were inspired by goodwill and friendship for all peoples of the earth without distinction of colour, creed and caste. His chief purpose was to "interpret America to India".[12] This he wanted with a view to enable India to assimilate such of the American ideas and ideals as were likely to help her in her aspirations towards freedom, and in her afforts towards national efficiency.

In the introduction to his Autobiography, written in 1914 in New York, he praised terrorists in India for their "valour and patriotic sacrifice". In particular, he extolled the murder of Narendra Gossain (the approver in the Alipur conspiracy case who was murdered in jail by two revolutionists who were later executed)[13] and remarked that "a day will come when people will take wreaths of homage to their statues".[14] Likewise, he wrote: "The bomb thrower on Lord Hardinge did a memorable act unique for its valour". Lajpat Rai, however, regretted that the secret societies lacked the support of wealthy people and that their revolutionary acts were regarded by the masses as sheer madness. While the revolutionaries "spread the gospel of freedom", he deplored the fact that the educated Indians regarded their efforts as futile and detrimental to India, and he charged them with selfishness and cowardice. Lajpat Rai added: "they (educated Indians) desire liberty but they are not prepared to make any sacrifices for it. If the British declared they would quit India in a week's time, 90 per cent of them would send petitions begging for them not to be forsaken... they were brought up in confort and fear, the hardships entailed in political unrest and revolution.... they profess desire for 'liberty' but they prefer to continue to enjoy their comfort though it means continuance to wear the badge of slavery. They are slaves to lucre, status and comfort... Those who blame the extremists' party for 'having injured the cause' by prompting Government repression, do not realise that under foreign rule, peace unalloyed by repression would be fatal. The political consciousness created by the extremists in a decade could not have been created by the moderates in half a century. For a subject nation, nothing is more fatal than peace... liberty can not be won without sacrifice".[15]

All this seems to be the language of an ardent revolutionary. But it would be wrong to infer from Lajpat Rai's praise of the terrorists that he approved of their aims or methods. In America a number of Indian revolutionaries had sought asylum in the hope that they would be able to work there freely and fearlessly. On his arrival in America, Lajpat Rai got into touch with several Indians. "As soon as I reached the shores of America" writes Lajpat Rai, "I came into contact with all classes of my countrymen who were then in that country. With the exception of men who were directly or indirectly in the pay of the British Government, I found all of them inspired by a high standard of patriotism. Most of them were extremists, only a few moderates. Among the former a large number were of the revolutionary type-some frank and open advocates of violence, others rather of a mild kind. The former were in alliance with Germany and were being supplied with money by German Government agents".[16] In November, 1914, Lajpat Rai was invited by two members of the Ghadr Party, Chandra Chakravati and Heramba Lal Gupta, to a meeting of Indian students at their Hindustani Association in New York. Here Chakravarti gave an anti-British and pro-German speech. When pressed to speak, Lajpat Rai said, "I am an Indian patriot and I wish freedom for my country. I have no sympathy with the Germans nor I have anything against them. Considering our present circumstances we will rather stay in the British Empire as a self-governing part of the latter than go out to be governed by another nation".[17] At another meeting of the Ghadr party, Lajpat Rai was told by one Maulvi Barkatullah that a rebellion was imminent in India, that it will be launched by the Amir of Kabul and that Lajpat Rai should co-operate without fear, since India would be free in three months's time. To this Lajpat Rai answered: 'I had not a grain of faith in what he said and also that I did not want either the Amir's or the German's rule in India, and that how so much I hatred British rule I did not believe that at this state India could defend herself against foreign intruders even if they succeeded by any chance in turning out the British".[18]

In December 1914, Heramba Lal Gupta approached Lajpat Rai in Boston, and informed him that the Germans were eager to have his (Lajpat Rai's) support on any terms, and he asked him if he would co-operate. To this Lajpat Rai answered, "No". At Los Angeles, Heramba Lal Gupta again tried to persuade Lajpat Rai to sign the proclamation of independence which they intended to issue and in which they proposed to incite the Indian soldiers fighting in Flanders to revolt against the British. It was again flatly refused. In this connection Lajpat Rai writes:

> Once more he(H.L.Gupta) offered me the leadership of the whole organisation and told me that the German leaders had issued special instructions to their consulates to try to win me over and that they would do anything I would want them to do. Once more I refused and ended with the suggestion I had made before for future propaganda and asylum for themselves and others.[19]

It is thus clear that the Indian revolutionaries abroad made repeated overtures to Lajpat Rai in order to obtain his support to their cause. It also appears that the German Government were keen to enlist Lajpat Rai on their side. Some Indian revolutionaries in America acted under the misapprehension that the masses in India were ready to join an armed revolt against the British provided they were supplied arms and ammunition. While others deliberately tended to create such an impression in the minds of foreigners, possibly to secure money or perhaps to maintain their position and following. In a talk with Lajpat in April, Ram Chandra, the leader of Ghadr party said:

"hundreds and thousands of Indians would be there to receive arms to start a revolution at once".[20] But in their hearts they knew that this was not a reality. When Lajpat Rai retorted to Ram Chandra that "he could not be ignorant of the fact that outside the ranks of the army, the whole of the Punjab and Karachi could not produce even 5,000 men, who had ever seen a rifle, much less a machine gun",[21] the Ghadr leader had to admit the fact. Lajpat Rai did not see any chance of success even with the German help. On the contrary he believed that the Germans would grab India, and would suck the life blood out of her even more mercilessly than the English had done.[22]

The Indian revolutionaries in America made repeated endeavours to win Lajpat Rai's sympathy for the Government of Germany. But they failed to persuade him because his means and methods for the political advancement of India were wholly different from theirs. There were reasons which impelled Lajpat Rai to keep himself aloof from Indian revolutionaries. Firstly, he was pessimistic about the plans and success of the revolutionaries. He did not believe that an alliance with Germany would do India any good. "I, therefore," writes Lajpat Rai, "resisted all attempts to involve me into this alliance and simply refused to be a party to any schemes of bringing about a revolution in India with the help of German money or German arms. I knew that outside the ranks of the army there were few Indians who could even wield an ordinary rifle or use even a revolver. What chance was there for the success of a revolution in India, even if (German arms) could be smuggled into India in sufficient quantities for the use of the revolutionaries?" Secondly, though Lajpat Rai was an enemy of the British Raj, he did not lose faith in the "bonafides of British declarations or British promises".[23] Further, he did not want to do or say anything which might jeopardise India's case at the time of peace settlement after the War.[24] Another reason for his refusal to join the Indian revolutionaries was his belief that India was not prepared for a revolution. He explained, "Having no faith in the keen readiness of my country for an armed revolution, I would only wish them to proceed on the lines of progressive nation-building. I had worked on these lines and I wanted to continue my work on the same lines".[25] Then Lajpat Rai was anxious to return to India. So he did not want to make any alliance with the Germans or with the Indian revolutionaries which could render his return to India impossible.[26]

Despite his disagreement with the Indian revolutionaries as to their aims and methods and his refusal to join their activities, Lajpat Rai kept in touch with some of them. He applauded their patriotism and spirit of self-sacrifice. He also gave them advise "willingly and freely", mainly, as he says "to save them from injury".[27]

Lajpat Rai's sojourn to Japan in July-December, 1915 occupies a unique place in the history of India's struggle for freedom. On July 19 he reached Japan from Francisco. Japan, since the beginning of 20th century, attracted a fair number of Indian students, and their number steadily increased after her spectacular victory over Russia. By 1910-11, there were over one hundred Indian students in Japan. Besides, there were many businessmen, mostly concentrated in Tokyo and Kobe.[28] Japan was then an embodiment of military strength in Asia which appealed to the imagination of the young. The rapid and successful emergence of Japan as a great modern industrialised country exited the admiration and envy of the Indians. Some of the progressive Indian leaders believed that Japan was the only really independent country in Asia; the rest of the continent looked eagerly to her for help and sympathy in gaining freedom.[29] Most important among them were Bhagwan Singh, Abni Nath Mukherji, Heramba Lal Gupta, Rash Behari Bose, Maulvi Barkatulla, Kesho Ram sabarwal, Ram Kishen, Ram Lal, Sohan Singh, etc.[30]

As early as 1900 an Oriental Youngmen's Association was formed by a few Indian students with the object of facilitating the cultivation of friendship between the Japanese and the Indian and other Oriental students studying in Japan and to help the latter in their careers while in that country.[31] In Dcember 1903, the Indo-Japanese Association was established. After the

Russo-Japanese War there was a large influx of Indian students and some of them went to China. This gave a fillip to the activities of the Indo-Japanese Association. Another association namely Japan and India Club was started by Indian students in Tokyo with the help of many Japanese students, but not much is known about its activities.[32] Even in the pre-War years, some of the Japanese had shown their sympathies towards the Indian National Movement. The British Government took strong objection to the speech of Count Okuma, former Prime Minister of Japan, before the Kobe Chamber of Commerce on November 2, 1907, when he said that "the three hundred millions of Indians who were oppressed by the Europeans were looking for protection of Japan from the oppression of Europe. Indians were fomenting an agitation for boycott of European goods and if the Japanese failed to avail themselves of the opportunity, they were disappointing the Indian people".[33]

It was this country that Lajpat Rai chose to carry on his activities. He had real curiosity about this eastern country reborn into modern greatness. He wanted to study things to see for himself the secret of Japan's marvellous progress. But there was another objective too in his mind: "I was determined to try to establish a link between India and Japan which might be of permanent value to both the countries. So with that object in view I began to see persons and institutions".[34] On August 16, 1915, the British Consul General, Yokolama, reported that Lajpat Rai had atleast one secret interview with the Ghadr leader Bhagwan Singh[35] at a secluded place in Japan. On his arrival in Tokyo, Lajpat Rai met Rash Behari Bose who was then living under the name, P.N.Thakur, and was under orders of deportation. Rash Behari is said to have entereated Lajpat Rai to take charge of a sum of 21,500 yen, though the latter did not believe in Bose's programme. The tenor of Rai's writings give an impression that perhaps he did not know that Thakur was Rash Behari. But Lajpat Rai knew that Rash Behari was working in Japan under the assumed name of P.N.Thakur.

The confidential report of the Government reveals that Abani Nath Mukarji was carrying messages from

Rash Behari Bose in Japan to revolutionaries in India. He was arrested at Singapore, and he gave considerable information about Lajpat Rai's doings in Japan. In July 1915, Abani was engaged by Lajpat Rai's as a guide. According to him Lajpat Rai disapproved of the Ghadr propaganda.[36] Heramba Lal Gupta had come to Japan on October 2, 1915 from America to seek the help of the Japanese for the Indian revolution. He sought Lajpat Rai's advice as "how to carry on an anti-British propaganda in Japan".[37] Lajpat Rai told him frankly that in denouncing British rule in India he would co-operate with anyone, but he would never give himself out either as a revolutionary or as one standing for separation from the British Empire.[38]

The British Government took a serious view of the activities of Japan revolutionaries in Japan, and they prevailed upon the Japanese Government to take some measures to stop anti-British propaganda. The result was that two Indian revolutionaries, Heramba Lal Gupta and Rash Behari Bose, were served with a notice to leave Japan within five days.[39] This created great indignation amongst the Indians and the Japanese. In this connection Lajpat Rai writes: "Virtually the whole of the Japanese press condemned the order and denounced this violation of the rights of asylum to political refugees so much honoured and respected by the European natives".[40] The Union of the Japanese press and some leading men Mitsura Toyama, Aijo Sama, Kitosata and Inukai Ki, the leader of the Kokuminto Opposition Party in the Diet, waited on Premier Okuma and Foreign Minister Baron Ishil to protest against the order and other leaders raised the question in Parliament.[41] It may be mentioned here that Okuma had a general sympathy for the Indians. He had founded an Indo-Japanese Society to foster closer cultural and economic relations between the two Asian countries. At Lajpat Rai's request Professor Iso Abe and Professor Busawa, sympathetic to the Indian cause, saw Count Okuma, the Japanese Premier. The Premier professed entire ignorance and he said that the action had been taken by the Foreign Minister without consulting him and the Cabinet. He hinted that the Japanese Government would not pursue the matter with any keenness. So the Japanese politicians found a way out of saving the Indians affected by the order. "On the eve of the last day", writes Lajpat Rai, "the Indians followed by the two constables went on a visit to one of the leading members of the Japanese Diet (Parliament). The men went inside but the police remained outside. After a while it was found out that the Indians had walked out of the house by another door and were missing. They were never arrested".[42] According to official records Toyama, an anti-British and sympathiser to Asian revolutionary, also played important role to protect Bose and Gupta.[43] While the police waited outside Toyama's front door, Bose and Gupta were whisked away and hidden in the loft of a bakery owned by one of Toyama's disciples Soma Aizo, whose daughter Bose was later to marry.[44] Thus, various factors including presence of Indian leaders helped very much for the protection of Bose and Gupta. In fact, though Japan was officially an ally of Britain, a large segment of effective Japanese opinion was anti-British and therefore, sympathetic towards India's struggle for freedom.

When the news of the revolutionaries's escape reached the British Ambassador, he "earnestly impressed" on the Japanese Government, "the disappointment of His Majesty's Government at the failure of the arrangement elaborated with so much trouble and at such great expense". He had no alternative, however, but to send the Atlas back to Hong Kong despite Ishil's assurances that as soon as the police succeeded in arresting the Indians they would be deported immediately.[45]

In Japan, Lajpat Rai carried on his nationalistic propaganda through press. It was generally moderate and well worded. His articles were published in the newspapers, The Mayu, The Yomato Shinbun, The Nichi Nichi Shinbun, The Osaka Mainichi, and Japan Advertiser of Tokyo and Yokoham. Lajpat Rai writes, "Throughout my stay in Japan I was in close touch with the Japanese press".[46] In Japan he published a pamphlet entitled, Reflections on the Political Situation in India in December, 1915. Lajpat Rai's Reflections is a warning and assertion that only self-reliance and strong measures would free the helpless millions of Indians from the murderous tentacles of the British octopus. He held the British responsible for 'unrest', 'sedition' and discontent in India. He wrote, "the last ten years furnished ample evidence of the fact that India is, as compared with the decade preceding it, seething with discontent which, not infrequently, manifests itself in forms of sedition and violence. That there is unrest, even the British admit. That there is sedition also they do not and cannot deny. But they explain away the former and ascribe it to causes other than a general widespread dissatisfaction with the British rule. The latter, they maintain, is due to the mischievous propaganda of a few revolutionary malcontents, whose numbers and importance they belittle. But the many repressive and coercive measures to which they have resorted within the last ten years in order to put down sedition, tell a different tale".[47] Lajpat Rai described the Indian situation as grave and explained, the "mere enacting of a Press Act, almost unsurpassed in its comprehensive rigidity and in the summary powers which it gives to the Executive Government, to supress any newspaper or publication which the Government may dislike, has not proved effective. The drastic powers given to Government by the legislature have been exercised in hundreds of cases... The situation in India is however, becoming grave and the fate of both England and India is involved".[48] He believed, "Repression only intensifies the discontent".[49] Notwithstanding the unsuccessful attempt to enlist Lajpat Rai's support to the Ghadr party, the Indian Nationalist Committee at Leipzig, published in 1917, his article entitled Reflection on the Political Situation in India[50] with the following introduction:

> Insulted and disillustioned India will realise frustration after the war and will tread upon the red path of revolution to complete the work begun by the patriots who waged the first war of Independence in 1857 .

The British Government took a serious view of Lajpat Rai's activities in foreign lands. They prohibited the entry of this pamphlet, Reflections, in India and Great Britain. It is further obvious from a secret file of the India Office, London which reveals official attitudes towards Lajpat Rai's activities in Japan. "Lala Lajpat Rai is an Indian Nationalist who was not openly thrown his lot with the Ghadr Party but is working with them. He favours a more discreet propaganda as more effective and his written, chiefly for English and American readers, a very clever pamphlet called Reflections on the political situation in India. This was actually written while he was in Japan last autumn (1915)... an intercepted letter from his agent in Japan... asks for the addresses of Punjab pleaders and other influential men to which to send the copies. Large quantities have now been sent to America and India, and the prohibition of its import into the latter country has caused the author much pain, but he is reported to be busy now on other work of a similar nature".[51] On April 1, 1916, the Punjab Chief Court cancelled Lajpat Rai's pleader's certificate for the year 1916 on the ground of his continued absence from India and also for having published the Reflections.[52]

The results of Lajpat Rai's visit to Japan were very significant. Among the high officials whom he met were the Premier (Count Okuma), several members of the Cabinet and other politicians. Professor Iso Abe, Professor Whelnack, Professor Shiozawa, Professor Kamada and Dr. Shumei Ohkawa, a noted Japanese historian, were his close friends. He delivered lectures at the Wasada and Keio universities and also higher Commercial School at the invitation of the authorities. He had presided over a banquent in honour of the coronation of the new Emperor of Japan at the Vyeno Seiyuken Hotel on the evening of November 27, 1915. It was attended by about 100 people, half of which were leading professors of the universities while other consisted of people holding high status in business, politics and society.[53] The Japanese sponsor of this rally was Okawa Shumei, who was to be the most dedicated ultra-nationalist supporter of the Indian revolutionaries during the war years. They were deeply moved by a fiery speech in English by Lajpat Rai. Its impact led Hugh Byas, the English editor of the American owned Japan Advertiser in his report of the meeting to compare

Lajpat Rai as an orator and politician with the eloquent Welsh radical Lloyd George.[54] In a private letter to Lippmann, an American journalist, Lajpat Rai writes about his successful visit to Japan thus:

> I spent my time in Japan very usefully for the point of view of my cause, made many friends and succeeded in consolidating public opinion in our favour. The Prime Minister gave me a very long interview extending over an hour and a half and presented me with his photograph with an autograph. The Japanese universities invited me to lecture and the Japanese press gave a banquet in my honour and so on. I think I know fully all the ins and outs of the Japansese politics.[55]

Lajpat Rai also became popular among the Japanese students. They sought his advise on progressive ideas and revolutionary movements in colonies. One of the young students there, who later became one of its renowed professors, Tatsuno Suke Uyeda, called frequently at Lalaji's house which had been chosen and secured for him by Uyeda himself. He made himself particularly useful by translating for Lalaji what appeared in the Japanese press about him - just as a labour of love. On his return to America, some of Japanese students were in touch through private correspondence with him. Some of the letters available now in the proscribed literature of the Indian Government unfold sympathy of Japanese students for Lajpat Rai and Indian cause. For example, in a letter to Lajpat Rai, one Japanese student wrote:

> I have been in Europe. It has, I think, no great future for itself. But Asia, especially India, is of a great promise. Here it is needless to say what India feels, thinks, wants and does or must do, because you will know about all these. From my humble study on your country, I wish heartily that I may in the heart of the great land with my background and foreground of the Himalayas, the Ganga, the Indus and historical monuments before all which I shall bow in silence. My silence however, some day will break into voice to declare to my countrymen for Pan Asia. Take me to your country if you have business for me. Call me to Lahore if you want me for India.[56]

What he gleaned in Japan as a student, Lajpat Rai presented to his own countrymen through the Modern Review, Calcutta, which also issued the entire series (with some additions) as a brochure, entitled The Evolution of Japan and Other Papers. It had quite a wide range dealing with conditions in Japan, "political, economic, social and religious". To him, "the most wonderful things were the intense patriotism of the Japanese and the wonderful progress they had made in every department of life within a short period of 50 years, i.e. since the Meiji era". He found it worthwhile "to study the secret of their success; to find out the traits of character which had not only saved them from falling pray to European organisation, but even helped them to become as well-organised and efficient a nation as they had proved themselves to be in the great Russo-Japanese war".[57]

As mentioned above the British Government did not permit such thought provoking and sympathetic letters to reach up to its destination. In fact, Lajpat Rai was under permanent survillence since his deportation in 1907. His activities and works were carefully watched in India and abroad by the British agents.

While in Japan, Lajpat Rai received information of how Indians of Independent political views especially those returning from America and Japan were being maltreated by the British Government in India. He made up his mind not to return to India. He left Yokohma for America on December 12 and landed at San Francisco on December 27, 1915.[58]

Why did the Japanese high officials and people co-operate and symathise with Indian leaders and Indian revolutionary movement? Anti-British air was waving in Japan particularly after 1912. The series of Japanese reverses in China from 1912-14 largely at the hands of their British ally, did much to discredit co-operative diplomacy. So did the Entente's empty handed requests for Japanese military assistance in a European war which is no way threatened Japan's interests. The British, of course, were under intermittent pressures from the French and the Russians to make imperial concessions which might purchase fuller

Japanese support in the war. Not unnaturally the British showed little enthusiasm for sacrifices largely at their own expence, but their attitude to Japanese claims engendered increasing ill-will in Japan. During most of 1915, the Indian revolutionaries and their German supporters were fully occupied with attempts to strike at India from bases which were closer to Japan. The Japanese for their part, and this applied particularly to the ultra-nationalists and Pan Asianists were fully absorbed from January to June 1915 in the twenty one Demands crisis in china. The denouncement of this affair represented a temporary setback for both extra-parliamentary and the parliamentary nationalists.

In the United States, Lajpat Rai found partisan jealousies and mutual bickerings among the Indian revolutionaries. Bhagwan Singh on his return from Japan to the United States assumed the leadership of the dissatisfied elements of the Ghadr party. He along with Santokh Singh and Ram Singh accused Ram Chandra of graft. They also attributed the failure of their plans to Ram Chandra. Besides these wranglings there were the provincial differences. Lajpat Rai was of opinion that the Bengali revolutionaries in the United States brought nothing but "discredit to their cause in this country (U.S.A) as well as in German circles".[59] His experience about the Indian revolutionaries was very sad and disappointing. He analysed the situation thus: "I think the temptation to which youngmen, undisciplined in public life, struggling for a mere living in a foreign country against great odds where moral moorings had been unlosened by free thought and the teachings of Nietzsche, were subjected by a sudden accession of pecuniary strength, proved too much for them. It is no wonder they succumbed to it".[60]

Besides the Ghadr party many other associations of Indian patriots were already working in the United States for the cause of Indian independence. One such association was the Hindustan Association of the United States of America founded in 1913 at Chicago.[61] During the War the association was rather obscured by the activities of the Ghadr party. Dr. Narayan Subrav Hardikar and Keshav Deo Shastri were its prominent members. On December 11, 1914, in a letter to Lajpat Rai, Dr. Hardikar suggested that he should carry on his nationalistic advities and propaganda work through the Hindustan Association of America.[62] But Lajpat Rai did not feel enthusiastic to join this Association largely on account of the fact that he was not satisfied with the attitude of the Bengali members of the party whom he accused of provincialism. Lajpat Rai refused Hardikar's invitation thus: "I have not yet made my programme and when I make it I shall try to meet your wishes".[63] He was also of the view that it was impossible to achieve independence for India with foreign help. "No outside help can matter if there is nothing inside".[64] Lajpat Rai, therefore, organised the Indian Home Rule League of America on October 22, 1917. The objects of the League were:

(A) To support the Home Rule Movement in India by cooperating with such political organisations as Home Rule Leagues in India, Muslim League and Indian National Congress.

(B) To secure the power of self-determination for India through constitutional methods.

(C) To further all kinds of friendly intercourse - social, cultural, educational and commercial - between India and America.

(D) To supply authentic information on the vital problems of modern India to the American people by the publication of a monthly magazine or by such other methods as are deemed proper by the Council of the league.[65]

Lajpat Rai's Home Rule League ardently supported the allied war aims, more particularly the principle of self-determination in the hope that after the conclusion of hostilities this principle would be applied to India also. India, it argued, was rendering great help to England in terms of men, money and material. During this period great care was taken not to voice strong anti-British sentiments that could be distasteful to the people working for the successful prosecution of the war. At this stage all the hopes of the Indian

Nationalists of Lajpat Rai's school in the United states were fastened on the Allied Victory and on the coming events at the Peace Conference. American entry into the War had roused considerable hope and it was widely believed that President Wilson would use his influence in favour of the principle of self-determination for all oppressed nations. During the War, it also worked in harmony with the Home Rule Movement in India and England.

Lajpat Rai's League's progress was rapid. Several workers of the Hindustan Association and *Ghadr* party became the members of his Indian Home Rule League. J.T. Sunderland became its Vice-President, N.S.Hardikar as General Secretary, K.D. Shastri as Organising Secretary and R.L.Bajpai as Councillor. From January 1918, Lajpat Rai also began publishing a monthly journal, *Young India*, with Hardikar as its editor and D.S.V.Rao as General Manager. Through the columns of this monthly organ he advocated India's cause in the U.S.A. It also earned the sincere praise of Senators A.J.Gronna and Noris. In 1919, the League also established an Indian Information Bureau to furnish facts and reliable information about Indian affairs to editors of periodicals, visitors, students and others, and to serve as medium through which books on India might be ordered. Lajpat Rai was its first Director. Indians in the U.S.A. were of great help to him in supplying facts about the political situation in India. Rai felt the need for another organisation for channelising their energies for this work and soon formed them into an 'Indian workers Union'. Evening classes were started to train them. Rai himself taught reading and writing to the workers. These workers helped him financially out of their hard earned money, and assisted him in so many ways. The offices of the both Indian Home Rule League and the *Young India* was at 1400 Broadway, New York.[66] It was decided that K.D.Shastri should do most of the outside lecturing work while Hardikar should work at the Headquarters of the association in New York.[67] Under the president ship of Lajpat Rai, Indian Home Rule of America made considerable progress. In June it had over 300 members, of whom about half were Americans. Other members of the League consisted largely of Indian students (more especially Maratha students), some members of the Ghadr party and some enthusiastic theosophists.[68] The Ghadr followers were recruited to the League mainly through the activities of K.D.Bhosekar of Satara.[69] On November 29, 1918, the membership of the League rose to 600 and the financial account showed a balance of $ 5,900.[70]

Lajpat Rai received financial assistance from various sources to carry on the work of the Indian Home Rule League. In the beginning he had to depend exclusively on whatever help he could get from his countrymen in the United States and from his American sympathisers. Another important source was his sale of literature and lectures in different parts of America particularly in California, Boston and Philadelphia.[71] He also wrote on behalf of Hardikar and K.D.Shastri to collect money for League.[72] Tilak also came to Lajpat Rai's assistance. Towards the end of 1918 he received a large remittance from him which helped him to carry forward his work.[73] In November, he received a donation of $5,000 from Tilak.[74] "Needless to say" writes Hardikar, "how badly were in need of funds at that time and we were earnestly pleased by the Lokmanya Tilak; it enthused us to work with added spirit".[75] Lajpat Rai deposited the whole amount in a bank and instructed Hardikar that it should be used only for the work of propaganda.[76] He did not spend a single cent of that amount for his personal requirements or anything other than propaganda. Tilak arranged another $1,000 to be sent to Lajpat Rai for the League.[77]

It is further obvious from the incident narrated by Dr. Hardikar is retold by K.Sampathagiri Rao in these words:

> Hardikar used to write regularly to his brother Laxman Rao in Poona, and give an account of his own activity to him. In one such letter he had written about the hardship Lalaji was undergoing in running the organisations without the financial backing of anyone. Hardikar had also pointed out to his brother that Lalaji had even to wash his own clothes, clean his own utensile, and attend to all household work. When the Lokmanya read Hardikar's letter he was very much painted and

without wasting any time he made arrangements to send five thousands dollars (nearly Rs.16,000/- in Indian currency) to him. This was during the First World War. Nothing was allowed to go out of the country. It was very hard to send any assistance or help to Lalaji and his undertaking. Tilak approached Dr. Annie Besant and between them they decided to transmit the money through the medium of the Theosophical Society. Lalaji thanked Tilak profusely and praised his sagacity and his devotion to the cause of Indian freedom. Not a pie of this amount was used by Lalaji for himself.[78]

Lajpat Rai sent a brief report of the Home Rule work to Tilak in which he wrote, "Dr. Hardikar has returned from his tour which was very successful from every point of view. He brought new members, established new branches and secured also some funds. We have been issuing bulletins to the United States Press, given them a summary of what we put in the English Press".[79]

Tilak's death in 1920 was a great set-back to the financial resources of the League. "Now Tilak gone it will not be very easy to finance you", lamented Lajpat Rai to Hardikar.[80] On his return to India in 1920, Lajpat Rai continued to give financial help to the League. On August 13, 1920, in a letter to Hardikar, Lajpat Rai wrote in this connection thus: "In consultation with friends at Poona we have resolved to supply you with at least 8,250 rupees a month. The balance you must find from the U.S.A. Cut down your expenses. The office must be maintained".[81] Here, it would be appropriate to mention that Rai's propaganda organisations - India Office at 1400 Broadway, India Information Bureau and monthly magazine in America stoped in 1925 for want of funds.[82]

The work of the League was vigorously carried on by lectures, writings, and dissemination of news and information about India. The League's main publicity organ, was Young India. From time to time it published facts and figures, geographical data, economic, educational and linguistic statistics relating to India.

Lajpat Rai wrote mostly on various aspects of India's political developments.[83] Another typical method of the League's work was organizing dinners and talks. The first came off at the Civic Club on October 15, 1918, which was addressed by Reverend Dr. J.T. Sunderland, the New York publisher, B.W.Huebsch, H.R.Mussey of the Nation, and Lajpat Rai. The most successful of such dinners was the League's first anniversary dinner at the Grand Hotel on Broadway, New York City, on November 20, 1918. Three hundred guests heard speeches by Oswald Garrison Villard of The nation, John haynes Holmes, Miss Henrietta Rodman, J.T. Sunderland and Lajpat Rai.[84]

Between March and April, 1919, the Home Rule League sent Hardikar to undertake a trip to the Middle West part of America to spread its work in those areas, as well as to disseminate knowledge about the true political and economic conditions of India. He received the cooperation of many organisations, twenty five of which asked him to speak from their platforms. The character of his audiences varied from educational institutions (like Blackbern College, Burnheim College, Hebrew Institute and Irish Students League etc.), political groups (like Fabian Club, Friends of Irish Freedom, Labour Party, Labour Unions, Socialist party, Rotary Club, Women's Welfare League), and religious bodies, (like Church of Christ, People's Churches, Theosophical Societies and Unitarian Churches).[85]

According to Young India, N.S.Hardikar's lecture tour of the Middle West gained many friends and supporters in America for the cause of India. He received one of the heartiest receptions at the Labour convention at St. Louis. He was also present at the convention of the Illinois Labour Party at springfield, on April 10, 1919 where he addresses 1,500 delegates. The convention pledged its support to India's freedom. Similarly, the Fabian Club of Chicago passed a resolution in support of the right of self-determination for the people of India.[86]

By May 1919, branches of the League were organised in Anna Arbor (Michigan), Berkeley (California), Chicago (Illinois), Cleveland (Ohio), Columbus (Ohio), Indianapolis (Indiana), Kansas City (Missouri), Louisville (Kentucky), Milwaukee (Wisconsin), Minneapolis (Minnesota), and Philadelphia (Pennsylvania).[87]

The League gave up its technique of soft-pedalling its propaganda against Britain as soon as the War was over. By January, 1919, an Indian nationalist spokesman had taken his place at Washington, D.C., shoulder to shoulder with other peoples eager to put their cases before the Peace Conference. N.S.Hardikar represented the League there and spoke with a number of Congressmen. It was the first effort, on the part of the Indian nationalists in the United States, to interest members of Congress in the case of India. Charles T.Haillman expressed surprise at the cordial and intelligent reception Dr. Hardikar received from many of the members of both Houses of Congress. By avoiding many of the pitfalls of the ordinary lobbyist, he succeeded in "establishing a real relationship with some of the most influential members of both houses".[88] Some of the members showed keen interest in the Indian question. Speaker Clark proved to be unexpectedly well-informed on the subject. Some of the Senators showed by the sort of questions they asked that they had been thinking about India as a nation whose right to self-determination was on all-fours with the rights claimed for Poland and Czechoslovakia.[89] Of course, there was just as much misinformation about India at Washington D.C. as anywhere, and it would have been too much to expect that many of them would have gone to great lengths to defend India's case, but it was believed that the foundation was laid in much better fashion then usual. Miss Jeannette Rankin wrote to Lajpat Rai thus:

> Those members of Congress who met Dr. Hardikar were very much pleased with the way he represented the subject, and I think they became really interested. I feel that the educational work that he did will be very fruitful in the future. If the American people are intelligently informed on the situation of foreign countries, their sympathy will always be for freedom and democracy. For that reason, I believe that such work as Dr. Hardikar did in Washington will be helpful to... League.[90]

During his stay in America Lajpat Rai actively propagated Home Rule for India. He argued that the splitting up of an independent India into a number of political units was still preferable to its remaining under emasculating British rule.[91] He said that while English political ideas negated the totalitarian philosophy of Heinrich Von-Treitschke; British rule in India acted upon the doctrines of the Prussian Professor.[92] He pointed out that under Muslim rule, the Muslims had no Lancashire-like industries to protect, nor had there been an Indian Officer in Arabia or Persia, while under British rule, India, for the first time in her history, was ruled from the outside by an alien race, with the result that "for the first time in the political history of India it has become a political disqualification to be an Indian".[93]

President Wilson's war messages and the lofty principles enumerated therein had fired his imagination and he wished that "the whole world could be constituted into one single Republic with President Wilson as its head".[94] As the President of the Indian Home Rule League of America, he sent a telegraphic message to the President thus:

> Indian Home Rule League begs most respectfully to congratulate Your Excellency upon the lofty sentiments of your latest utterance which is bound to thrill the millions of world's "subject races". It constitutes a new character of World's freedom and the United States should have every reason to be proud of the part she is playing in the war. It is a noble and lofty role.[95]

After the War, on August 29, 1919, Lajpat Rai and N.S. Hardikar were allowed to address the Foreign-Relation Committee of the Senate on behalf of the Indian Home Rule League.[96] Besides pleading for national self-determination for India, it was pointed out in the brief that although the Convenant of the League of Nations and had signed on behalf of India by Secretary of State for India and the Maharaja of Bikaner, neither of them derived any authority from the people of India. It refused to attach any significance to a League of Nations which did not provide for the application of the principle of self-determination to the Nations that were held in subjection by the signatories of the Convenant. Thus, the inclusion of India in the League of Nations without the application of the principle of self-determination was a mere sham.[97] The brief referred to the resolutions of the Indian National Congress, passed in December 1918, relating to the subject and also to the representation made by B.G.Tilak to the Peace Conference in his capacity of a delegate, chosen by the Congress, to represent India at the Conference. Among those who helped arrange the hearing Young India gratefully mentioned the names of Senator Asle J. Ghonna of North Dakota, Senator George W. Norris of Ohio, Senator Joseph, France of Maryland and Frank P. Walsh and James G.Mythen of Baltimore.

In this connection it is significant to note that a Parsee named Rustom Rustomji, later found to be a British agent,[98] employed by the British Indian Government to counteract Indian Nationalist propaganda in the press and on the platform in the United States since 1915, had offered himself to the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to give evidence against Dudley Field Malone and the India Home Rule League of America. On the eve of the appearance of Dudley Field Malone before the Committee, he had written to Chairman Senator Lodge, posing as a Parsee citizen of Bombay, as editor and proprietor of the Oriental Review, and also as a member of the Indian National Congress, seeking permission to present evidence to the Committee. Chairman Lodge had written to him that the hearings were opened only to American citizen and that the particular series of hearings were closed and it was extremely unlikely that they would be reopened. On receipt of Chairman Lodge's letter of September 1, 1919, Rustomji, who was then living at 540 Riverside Drive, New York City, again wrote to Lodge protesting against Dudley Field Malone deposition before the Committee. Rustomji in his letter further said that Malone spoke without a first-hand knowledge of conditions in India and made utterly misleading exparte statements before the Committee on Foreign Relations. Enclosed with his letter to Chairman Lodge was his statement, prepared for presentation to the Committee, defending the British Government's nomination of the Maharaja of Bikaner and Lord S.P.

Sinha as India's official representatives to the Versallies Peace Conference. In the end, when all his efforts to obtain a hearing before the Committee failed, he challenged Malone's deposition in a letter to the Secretary of State and sent to him copies of letters that had passed between him and Senator Lodge.[99]

It was as a result of the efforts of India Home Rule League of America and particularly because of the contacts which Lajpat Rai and Hardikar established at WAshington, D.C., with various Congressmen that Senator McCormick of Illinois, in his speech to the U.S.Senate on August 20, 1919, while discussing the treaty of peace and its bearing on Asiatic politics, criticized British imperial rule in India. Senator McCormick described the Emperor of India and the Emperor of Japan as "two great Asiatic autocrats", to which lately France had also joined. He challenged the Versailles Treaty and the Covenant, as it consolidates the interests... and guarantees with our blood the territorial acquisitions of the three principal powers holding dominion over subject peoples - Britain, Japan and France".[100] The method of their acquisitions might differ, but the end was the same.

McCormick stated that the British rule in India was based upon the divisions among the Indian people and was maintained by the presence of British troops and the bayonets of these Indian mercenaries by whom the Frenchman, Dupleix, taught the British to conquer native dynasties. Referring to Professor Seeley's remark that Government in India as in England was not based upon the consent of the governed and that it was a government "in every respect race, religion, habits - foreign to the people". Senator McCormick observed: "Mr. President, this is not the charge of an Indian miscreant, a rebel against the British Imperial Raj, or of a wild Irish Sinn Feiner. It is not the testimony of a Tilak or a De Valera. It is not the view of an American theorist, but of seely, the English historian of the "Expansion of England".[101]

This was the first instance when a United States Senator, in the course of his address to the Senate, had openly condemned the British rule in India and identified himself with Indian nationalist sentiment. Soon afterwards, Senator France of Maryland, while speaking on the ratification of the Versailles Treaty in the U.S.Senate, on October 8 and 9, 1919, opposed the ratification on the ground that it practically guaranteed the perpetuity of British rule in India - a rule which, he contended had reduced the Indian people from a great, rich and influential nation, to a condition of helplessness and abject poverty.[102]

Senator France of maryland described the rule of British aristocracy in India as one of ruthless exploitation for generations. He based his statement on the writings of such authorities on British rule in India as Edmund Burke, Abbe Duobois, Sir W.W. Hunter, Sir Charles Elliot, Sir William Digby, Edwin Montague and Mrs. Annie Besant. He also quoted in his support Dr. R.C.Dutt and J.T,Sunderland as "a profound and sympathetic student of India affairs".[103]

Senator France's speech in the U.S.Senate gave the League and its organ, Young India, great satisfaction. For a long time, the Senator had taken keen interest in the vital problems of India. In order to prepare his speech, he had studied the Indian problem thoroughly.[104] The Young India claimed "We have from time to time supplied him the material that was needed". Indeed, the League and its propaganda organ since its inception had ceaselessly worked to create among the American Congressional circle a sympathetic understanding of the Indian problem. Long before his speech, Senator France had expressed appreciation for the work of the League and described the aspirations of the people of India for a larger measure of self-determination as a "proper and legitimate one". He had read with much interest its publications and in his letter to the editor of Young India had said that it was "rendering a valuable service in acquainting the people of America with the grave problems which confronted the people of India".[105] Similar interest in the activities of the League and its organ Young India was evinced by Senator Gronna of North Dakota and Senator George W.Norris of Nebraska. Senator Gronna a reader of Young India for nearly a year, stated that "The question of Young India was one which merits the consideration of all liberty-loving people". In the same way, Senator Norris wrote to its editor: "You are doing a great work and I most earnestly hope that success may crown your efforts".[106]

Thus, Lajpat Rai and Hardikar, succeeded in creating some interest in the Indian nationalist cause at Washington, D.C. They won for India valuable friendships of some important Congressmen.

Rai's Indian Home Rule League also took up the cause of the Indian revolutionaries in the United States, who were facing deportation to India. They were mostly convicted in the Hindu-German plot in 1918. Lajpat Rai had not approved of their methods and ideas, but still he came to their rescue. "Whatever, be our political differences with those countrymen of ours", wrote Lajpat Rai in his editorial note of Young India, "We cannot but sympathise with them in the present trouble".[107] He declared that it was unworthy, of a civilized government like the United States to deny the right of political asylum to Indian political refugees, which even the British themselves had never denied, and referred to France which at that moment was giving shelter to several Indian revolutionaries. New York Immigration authorities had arrested for deportation Dhiren Sarkar, a convict in the Hindu-German plot released after serving his term of imprisonment. It was generally believed that the British Government was behind the deportation proceeding being undertaken by the U.S.Immigration authorities. The New York Call suggested that the British Consulate at San Francisco had supplied the U.S.Immigration authorities with a list of persons who, in their judgement, ought to be deported. It was suspected that on British official instruction, proceedings were started against Bhagwan Singh and Santokh Singh, who were still serving their sentences at McNeil Island, Washington. Taraknath Das and G.B.Lal were also on the list. When Bhagwan Singh was released, his bail was raised to $ 10,000. This made Young India say that the proceedings against the Indians were being influenced by "considerations other than those of the interests of the United States".[108]

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In its effort to stop deportation proceedings, the League had received enthusiastic support from American labour, which protested strongly against the proposed deportations of the Indian revolutionaries. The American Federation of Labour at its convention, held on June 19, 1919, in Atlantic City, New Jersy, adopted a resolution, directing its executive committee to look into the plight of Hindu revolutionists, who were under arrest and held for deportation. It asserted that their deportation to India would be "equivalent to sentencing them to death". The representatives of Indian Home Rule League went to Washington D.C. in connection with the deportation cases. They met Abercrombie, the Acting Secretary of Labour. They did not find that the Department of Labour had any particular animus against the Indian revolutionaries. Abercrombie promised a full and impartial consideration of all the cases when they were to come before him for final disposal.[109]

In the United States Lajpat Rai employed his time in study, writing and propaganda on behalf of India. In September 1916, while in Berkeley, he wrote a book entitled Young India with the object of drawing the attention of the civilized world to what was happening in India. In this he received monetary help from Professor Arthur U. Pope of the University of California who also introduced him to a New York publicist, Huebsch, who later became one of Rai's closet American friends and admirers. Young India was favourably received and reviewed by the American press, including the New York Times, The New York Evening Post, The New York New Republic. Lajpat Rai's name slowly captured the minds of the Americans through this book. The British Government passed an order under the Sea Customs Act prohibiting the entry of this book and subsequent issues into India.[110] Inspite of prohibition the London Home Rule League for India had published its own English edition of the Young India. Col. Wedgwood wrote the foreword[111] to the book and spent his own money to present a copy of the book to each member of the British Parliament.[112] This ban on the book was not removed until 1924. The Government's view was that Lajpat Rai was a professed ardent non-cooperator against the British Government, hence these restrictions.[113] The book gave birth to a debate in the House of Commons. Lajpat Rai was accused of being an agent of Germany in the House of Commons in 1917 by the House Secretary, Sir G.Cave, in his prolonged debate with Commander Josiah Wedgwood in respect of the seizure of the London Home Rule League copies of Rai's book, Young India. Wedgwood urged for proper evidence and very boldly tried to defend Lajpat Rai, but his pleas were turned down.

In 1917, Lajpat Rai published two letters entitled An Open Letter to the Hon'ble David Lloyd George, the Prime Minister of Great Britain and An Open Letter to the Hon'ble Edwin Samuel Montagu, the Secretary of State for India. In the first letter, addressed to the Prime Minister of Britain on June 13, 1917, Lajpat Rai wrote: "the only justification for my exile is that (in exile) I continue to speak about conditions in India and draw the attentions of the world to them". "But when the War broke out", he added in the same letter, "I thought that the best thing under the circumstances for us was to stand by you and establish our claim to better treatment". He again declared: "At no time before or during the War did I place my faith in the likelihood of India getting any help from Germany".[114] Lajpat Rai stoutly refuted the allegation that he tried to secure German help or that he had pro-German leanings:

> You know as well as any one else does, how the German Government has been trying to win the goodwill of the Indians. It cannot be denied that the temptation was alluring. If, then, we have withstood it, it was not because we were in love with your Government in India, but on different grounds. Personally, I do not believe that any liberty is worth having which we cannot win ourselves, because liberty won by the aid of another, places us at the mercy of that other. European diplomacy is so crooked that it is futile to place faith in the promises of any of them. I would esteem German friendship as much as British or American or that of the Japanese or the Chinese; I would gratefully accept any help anybody would render in educating and fitting our youngmen for the coming task, but I would not do anything that would cause useless bloodshed in India... The

> World is not in love with you, Sir. There are a dozen peoples in the world who will be glad to see your downfall and help in bringing it about.[115]

Lajpat Rai was confident that the leading countries of the world would help India:

> They (other countries) will encourage him in every way they can, without bringing about diplomatic complications. So India will not be altogether friendless when the next opportunity to strike comes. By that time the country also will be better prepared to do something definite and more spectacular...[116]

Lajpat Rai also endeavoured to answer the oft-repeated charge levelled by many British statesmen and bureaucrates that India was not a nation. He believed that a common nationhood transcended the differences of religion, language, and culture as modern history and conditions prevailing in a large number of countries had clearly and effectively demonstrated. He did not accept that "sameness of language, religion and race is necessary for a political national existence. Switzerland, Canada, the United States, South Africa, Russia, Austria and Hungary have demolished that theory".[117] Lajpat Rai even went to the extent of suggesting that splitting up of an independent India into a number of smaller political units was still preferable to its remaining under emasculating British rule. He elaborated:

> Very well, Sir, divide India into small nations and give them self-government separately. You will admit that there are parts of India which are homogenous, entitled to be called small nations in the sense in which Belgium, Switzerland, Denmark and Holland are. The bulk of the population follow the same religion, speak the same language and belong to the same race.[118]

Lajpat Rai further argued that the sentiment of unity was steadily growing in India over the past few years and the attempts on the part of certain British officials would not succeed. In a letter to the Secretary of State he said:

> .... India of 1917 is also quite different from India of 1907. Hindus and Muhammedans have sunk their differences and are making a united stand in their demand for political liberties. The Anglo-Indian plans of creating an Indian Ulster have miscarried and never before during the British domination was India so united in its political and economic ideals as today. In 1907, we were yet babies "crying for the moon". We had not yet grasped the fundamentals of the situation. Our horizon was clouded by sectarian boundaries and we were fighting for crumbs. In 1917, we are a united people no longer praying for concessions, but demanding rights...[119]

The British Government described an open letter to the Secretary of State as "seditious" and "harmful". On December 13, 1917, State Department Councillor Frank Polk passed on to the U.S. Attorney General a Memo from the British Embassy "Wherein it is stated that a seditious pamphlet, by Lajpat Rai entitled An Open Letter to the Hon'ble E.S.Montagu has been received in London in an American postal packet addressed to members of the India Council; that it would appear that this letter was published in the United States; and that, therefore, the British Government would be grateful if the Government of the United States could take steps to prevent the dissemination and exportation of this pamphlet".[120] To the U.S.Postmaster General also a similar note was sent forthwith. Polk sent a further communication to the Attorney-General on January 8, 1918 transmitting a Memo from the British Government dated January 2, that it appeared the publisher of the pamphlet by Lala Lajpat Rai was "Messrs Huebsch and Company of New York" as the same publisher had also "published various other publications of a similar character emanating from the same person".[121] Under the signature of Cecil Spring Rice the British Memo also stated that "that a confidential memorandum on the mischievous activities of Lajpat Rai is under preparation for the information of the State Department and will be forwarded as soon as it is completed".[122] All these Memos had caused further harassment and questioning of Lajpat Rai regarding his attempts and vital involvement in launching political campaigns against the British Government. Lajpat Rai also received a verbal warning from the Department of Justice on January 3, 1918 not to circulate the pamphlet An Open Letter to Montagu.[123]

Lajpat Rai made untiring and relentless efforts to espouse India's cause before the high officials and the British people. He warned the British that the policy of neglecting the rights of a nation might be a dangerous game. To counteract the threat to India on account of German plots and propaganda, he urged the British Government to concede self-government to the people of this country. He also saw the Indian problem in the context of world developments and situation. In his article, "The International Importance of India" in The Nation of New York, Lajpat Rai wrote:

> Now that Germany is knocking at the doors of Asia, it is well to consider the international importance of India, not only for maintaining the balance of power in the great Eastern continent, but also for establishing the basis of a durable peace... The vast bulk of her population come of Arya stock, being thus racially related to the Europeans. There is, however, enough mixture of the Semitic and the Mongolian stock to make her people cosmopolitan; of the former race there are many among India's seventy million of Mohammedans, and of the latter there are large numbers in the populations of Bengal, Burmah, Nepal, and the Himalayas. There is also some negroid blood in the South. Thus, Indian racial composition is a guarantee against the exclusive predominance of one race over others. The fear of German plots in Afganistan and India, through Persia and turkestan, has begun to disturb the peace calculation of the belligerents. Let Great Britain take a bold step and cut the Gordion knot by granting self-government to India...[124]

The publication of Lajpat Rai's book, Young India, was followed, a year later, by England's Debt to India, which depicted a sordid picture of economic exploitation of the country under British rule. In 1919, was published the Political Future of India which contains Lajpat Rai's views on the Montford reform scheme and related problems. In a different class stands his Problem of National Education for India (London, 1920), also written during his stay in America. This work, the product of serious study and observation for many years, offers a clean analysis of his philosophy of education. It contains scathing criticism of existing motives as to religious education; it counteracts the narrow nationalism of looking too much to the past.[125] A monthly organ, named Young India, was started in January 1918 with Lajpat Rai as Editor. A year later he set up the Indian Information Bureau in New York to serve as a publicity organisation on behalf of India. As a result of Lajpat Rai's writings considerable interest in India and Indian problems was aroused in the press of America. "In the United states today", Lajpat Rai wrote, "the daily, the weekly and the monthly press of the country is constantly full of reference of India".[126]

Lajpat Rai had a fairy big circle of friends in America. Oseald Garrison Villard, Editor of the weekly Nation regarded Rai with great respect. John Heynes Holmes was a great admirer of India and Lalaji. Dudley Field Malone, Under Secretary in the U.S.Government, helped Rai when he placed India's case before the American Senate. Dr. J.J.Sunderland was made Vice-President of the Home Rule League of America. Huebsch had published all Lajpat Rai's books. An American lady who was known by the secret name of 'Agnes had paternal regard for Lalaji. She worked day and night for the sake of India's independence.[127]

Indian revolutionaries living in America - Dr.Taraknath, B.K.Roy, Swami Bodhananda, Sailesh Chandra Ghose, R.K.Khemka, Rakhit, Ramlal Bajpai, Shankar Rao Gokhale, Dr. Govinda Rao Ankaliker, Dr. Vaman Rao Kokatnoor, Santokh Singh abd several others were close to Lajpat Rai.[128]

Dr. De Valera, the leader of the freedom struggle in Ireland also met Lajpat Rai in New York. Dr. De Valera who was imprisoned in a London jail, escape from there and defied the Atlantic Ocean and reached the American shores. The reception which the Irish people of America accorded him was unprecedented. The Indian revolutionaries living in the city also joined this programme. Hardikar writes: "At the close of the programme, Lalaji and De Valera discussed ways and means of achieving independence for their respective countries. It was decided to arrange for all instruments for this objective. I could see how there was no limit to the pleasure of the two courageous fighters when they met to discuss the strategy to fight their common enemy. Just as national heroes came on the Indian scene to fight for her independence there were heroes in Ireland. Their spokesman Dr. De Valera had come to us and started work, as Lalaji himself had done. He also helped Lalaji's work".[129]

During the period Lajpat Rai was away, India passed through many turmoils. He was aware of the changing situation in the country. He kept himself in close touch with the political developments in India. The World war broke out in 1914 when he was in England. India being a mere dependency was also dragged into the War. Although Lajpat Rai had signed the pledge of loyalty to the Emperor along with other members of the Congress delegation, Bhupendra Nath Basu, M.A.Jinnah, M.A.Samrath and Sarojini Naidu, he did not believe in unconditional support to the British in the War. He belonged to the school of such Indian politicians who wanted to extend help to the British on a clear understanding that after the cessation of hostilities India would be granted self-rule. He issued an article in which he held the British Government responsible for discontent and sedition in India. He warned that the situation might easily and rapidly grow very grave unless the British handled it in a spirit of liberal statesmenship.[130] "India", he wrote, "the land of romance and chivalry, should help England with men and money, in her splendid mission to restore liberty in Europe and erect high again the temples of gods sacrileged by the German Barbarians... believing English might have seen her own mistakes and changed her policy and would willingly give to India her rightful dignified place in the Councils of Nations."[131] Expressing his views on War on behalf of India he wrote: "What the present attitude of the Indians establishes is that they will stand by the Empire in any quarrel that England may have with other European powers". "But" he added, "this does not justify our concluding that India forgets her grievances against the English Government". He further wrote: "What the Indians aspire to is political independence - not an exchange of masters. They would rather keep their connexion with the British Empire, and would prefer to remain in it, if only they would be allowed to share in the privileges of its membership, instead of continuing in their present dependent position".[132] He assured the British Government and the British people about Indian loyalty to the Empire. But he hoped that British statesmen and the British people would not construe them as representing an absolute condition of the Indian mind. "Expressions of loyalty from India", Lajpat Rai wrote, "must therefore be taken with a pinch of salt-not that one underrates their importance, or doubts their sincerity as against the other European powers with whom we are engaged in War, but just to remind the British public that there is an Indian problem which must imperatively be considered when, after the war is over, we sit down to recast the political map of the world, and to readjust the political relations of the different races and the nationalities of the world. Nay, I go a step further, and say that it would be fine stroke of policy if the authorities were at this moment to do something to strike the imagination of the people of India, and to convince them beyond a shadow of doubt that the British do value their loyalty and really respect their desire to be citizen of the Empire".[133]

In contrast to the Congress declaration, Lajpat Rai maintained that India should not support England in the War as mercenaries.[134] But he did not want to take advantage of England's difficulty during the War. He believed that the struggle after the War might, however, be even more bitter and sustained.[135] Even when preparations for what proved to be a hopeless 'rising' in India at the instigation of Germany were being made in the U.S.A., Lajpat Rai had the courage to declare that no thoughtful Indian at present was anxious to or even willing to seek the aid of a foreign government.[136] He criticised the revolutionaries as they were angling for German help against the British in India.[137]

In India the enthusiastic expression of Congress support to England in the War was dimmed by the end of 1916. The War and its many-sided effects completely transformed the attitude of Indians towards British rule and towards the hitherto acknowledged superiority of the West.[138] In 1914 Tilak after the end of his period of internment at Mandalay had come back to the country on the crest of popular enthusiasm. The change also coincided with the death in 1915-16 of the three most prominent moderate leaders, Pherozeshah mehta, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and G.Subramania Iyer. The Congress was robbed of the Moderate's influence. During the War the Muslim League had also come near the Congress. Turkey's war against England was considered in the orthodox circles as a Jihad (holy war) and some Muslims drifted towards nationalism. The authors of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reform, 1918 truely observed that the "Muslims suspected a concerted plot of the Christian Powers to make an end of Islam as a temporal power".[139]

On November 17, 1916, the All India Congress Committee and the representatives of the Muslim League met at Calcutta, and resolved to make a joint demand for responsible government in India. The result was the Congress-League scheme or the Lucknow Pact of December 1916. The Pact demonstrated the United political will in the country, so necessary for both to deserve and get prepared for the impending constitutional reforms. Until 1915, the Congress voiced national aspirations but it was a body whose watchword was caution. Though still largely composed of lawyers, journalists, teachers and merchants, but under the control of the extremists it was becoming a powerful vehicle of militant nationalism. The change was expressed by Lajpat Rai thus: "India of 1917 is different from India of 1907. In 1907 we were fighting for crumbs. In 1917 we no longer pray for concessions but are demanding rights".[140]

At the 1916 Lucknow Congress, the Extremists headed by Tilak, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Annie

Besant and Bipan Chandra Pal, wrested the control of the Congress from the Moderates. "The Congress", Tilak declared, "had done its work as a deliberative body".[141] He called for action and voiced the demand for the Congress for Home Rule, that is, India to be a self-governing Dominion. He explained Home Rule as a form of Government within the British Empire in which the rule of the bureaucracy would be replaced by an administration responsible to the people.

The Home Rule League movement launched by Tilak and Mrs. Annie Besant soon created a new political consciousness in the country. The Indian political temperature began to rise. The two leaders visited various parts of India, and addressed largely attended public meetings. A large number of branches of the Home Rule League were established all over India. Lajpat Rai fully subscribed to the views of Annie Besant and Tilak. He described Home Rule in India as "inevitable and also imminent".[142]

In view of the countrywide agitation for Home Rule and the change brought by the War and in order to satisfy Indian nationalists the Secretary of State for India, Edwin Montagu observed on August 20, 1917 in the House of Commons:

> The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire.[143]

This was an attempt to stem the rising tide of nationalism. The August 1917 declaration caused disappointment among those Indian nationalists who were demanding immediate self-government. They felt that it fell short of the legitimate expectations and hopes of the Indians. The Moderates, on the contrary, greatly welcomed the historic announcement and characterised it as Magna Carta of India. Soon after Montagu's declaration of the reform proposals (Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms) popularly called as Dyarchy were announced in 1918. These reform proposals were whole-heartedly and enthusiastically accepted by the Moderates as progressive and substantial while the Extremists rejected them as disappointed, unsatisfactory and meagre. Mrs. Besant considered the reform scheme as "unworthy to be offered by England or to be accepted by India".

Lajpat Rai criticised the Moderates on their having accepted the Montagu-Chelmsford Report. He countered their argument that excessive criticism of the proposed reforms might result in their complete retraction by emphasising that the reforms were given not as a matter of favour, but because the pressure of circumstances in India made it no longer possible to postpone them. Moreover, he explained that even if the proposed reforms were to collapse the outcome would be preferable since they would either be replaced by a more democratic scheme or by a policy of repression that would serve to invigorate the Indian movement for liberty.[144] Expressing the anguish over the working of Moderate leaders Lajpat Rai, in a private letter to his friend wrote, "Our leaders of the moderate school have been awfully afraid of the masses. To their legal minds the masses have always looked dangerous. They have always been compromising with the bureaucracy, the lawyer, the banker, the manufacturer and the money lender. They have never fully realized their duty towards the masses. They have been prevented from doing so by the shortsightedness of their vision and by the fear of the ruling bureaucracy".[145]

The British sources reveal that Lajpat Rai sent a telegram welcoming the Montagu-Chelmsford Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms.[146] At other places he said that the Montford Scheme of reforms would add to the powers of capitalists and landlords. The policy of making new capitalist landlords ought to be immediately stopped. In an interview with the Tribune he stated that although he was not satisfied with the Reform Act, he was "in favour of working the reforms in a genuine spirit of co-operation".[147]

The Rowlatt Report and the circumstances connected with it proved more effective in the spread of political stir in India. The drastic powers which the

Government had taken during war period were to expire after six months of the armistice. The Indian Government knew that the atmosphere in the country was surcharged with excitement and discontent, and the post war reforms were still not in sight. The Government, therefore, appointed a committee (popularly known as the Rowlatt Committee after the name of its President Mr. Justice S.A.T.Rowlatt) in December 1917 to ascertain the situation in the country and to advise the Government whether any fresh legislation was necessary to enable them to deal more effectively with the revolutionary movement. On the report of the Committee, the Government of India passed two repressive Acts in March, 1919 to subsitute the war regulations.

This heavy dose of repressive legislation created strong anti-British sentiment and indignation in India. It greatly nullified the effect of the proposed reforms. The Indian Muslims were also greatly distressed at the dis-memberment of Turkey and the future of the 'Khilafat'. A sense of common danger brought Hindus and Muslims together. They started Satyagraha movement under the leadership of Gandhi. As soon as Gandhi launched his Satyagraha movement, Lajpat Rai expressed his full sympathy with the general spirit of the movement. On August 13, 1919 in a letter to Gandhi from New York, Lajpat Rai wrote, "I may be unable to sign the full pledge of a Satyagrahi, but if and when I return to India I shall sign the "pure Swadeshi vow".[148] He sincerely wished to be in India to share in full the misfortune and tribulations of his countrymen. He wrote, "My heart bleeds for them, but more for myself in having been deprived of the opportunity to serve and suffer".[149] He was whole heartedly in favour of Gandhi's policy of passive resistance. He regarded the doctrine of Satyagraha as the most effective remedy, not only for India's problems but also for the world. Gandhi wrote to Lajpat Rai that to him it was intolerable that a man like Lajpat Rai should have to remain outside India at that critical moment. He felt that "the place of every true Indian was in India".[150] The political temperature having risen Lajpat Rai was keen to come to India. He. therefore, immediately decided to apply again for passport.

Instead of meeting the situation sympathetically the Government decided to crush the Indian movement and brush aside whatever the Indians might say in the press or on platform. Along with the policy of concessions and reforms announced earlier the British Government continued to rely upon a policy of repression in order to meet the changed situation in the country. Chelmsford allowed various Local Governments to deal with the situation as they thought best. He gave wide and extensive powers to them. "Our policy then has been not to impose uniform methods on Local Governments, but to support each Local Government as far as possible in the measures which it considered suitable", the Viceroy informed the King-Emperor.[151]

No provincial head made such extensive use of this policy and authority as Sir Michael O'Dwyer, the Lieutenant-Governor of Punjab. He issued orders under the Defence of India Rule to deport two popular leaders, Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal, to Dharamshala. It created great discontent and anger among the Hindus and Muslims. On April 13, 1919, General O'Dwyer enacted with unprecedented cruelty the ghastly massacre of Jallianwala in Amritsar. This act of unrestrained brutality and the horrors of the martial law regime in Punjab roused the country to a bitter determination to fight against the alien rule.

Lajpat Rai was shocked by the account of the naked repressive policy of British Government, the arrest of popular leaders of Punjab - Harkishan lal, Duni Chand, Ram Bhaj Dutt, Satyapal, Kitchlew, Amarnath, Mohanlal, mangal Sen, Labh Singh, Saib Dyal, Mutiullah, etc.,[152] Jallianwala Bagh episode and above all the vote of approval of repression by the British Parliament. On November 9, 1919, in an article in the New Republic of New York, he expressed his deep anguish;

> India stands waiting to learn what England is going to do for her. The Government of India has in the meanwhile replied by the enactment of Rowlatt Acts and by the use of bombs, machine guns, and aeroplanes for the preservation of order. Moderate appreciation of Mr. Montagu's reform scheme has been rewarded by the wholesale arrests

> and deportations of political leaders in the Punjab and public flogging and court martiallings of their followers. The Punjab has now been under military law for about three months and during this time the people had a veritable production of a Tsarist regime there, the Government of India's final dispatch of the constitutional reforms is another indication of the same mind. The original scheme as enunciated during the war has been modified in important particulars with a view to maintain the supremacy of the bureaucracy. The need for the conciliciation is over, and Imperialism, is again asserting itself in its shameless nakedness.[153]

Lajpat Rai compared the 1919 repressive policy to that of 1902 and 1910. But he did not advise his countrymen either to adopt hatred and revenge or force and violence. He asked his people to fight for their rights. He advised them to "listen, wait, decide and determine".[154]

Lajpat Rai's exertions for securing the freedom of his country and placing India's case before the peoples of the world elicited praise from Indian leaders. When Tilak came to England in connection with his libel suit against Sir Valentine Chirol, he wrote to Lajpat Rai: "I get your monthly (journal) regularly and am too glad to find therefrom that you, and Dr. Hardikar under you, are doing good work there. The work requires to be continued until we succeed in reaching our goal; at any rate, until the reconstruction of the world is finally settled by the League of Nations after the conclusion of peace".[155] Tilak had come alongwith his legal advisers R.P.Karandikar of Satara, Vasudeorao Joshi of Chitrashala of Poona and his personal attendent G.M.Namjashi. They were staying with Baptista, President of the Indian Home Rule League of Poona at 10 Howley Maida Vale W2, London. Tilak had engaged Sir John Simon a barrister to plead his case while other side was represented by Sir Edward Carson. Rai helped Tilak to meet the expenses in London as he considered him "as the greatest among the Indian nationalists".[156] He did not agree with Col. Wedgwood who after meeting Tilak in London described him, " a man of dogmatic religious views". In a reply to the British M.P., Lajpat Rai wrote, "In fact I thought he had no religion of his own. Of course he has been and is, orthodox in his life but that is just because it is politic in his eyes to be so".[157] However, Tilak lost his trial and was obliged to pay charges. Lajpat Rai, a pessimistic towards British rules, simply commented, "Mr. Tilak has lost his case".[158]

By 1919, Lajpat Rai's prolonged stay abroad had confirmed his views that the greatest need of India was the political and economic uplift of the masses accompanied by universal education of the right sort. In his judgement the spirit of Indian political movement required a complete change in the working of leaders. He felt that the leaders must look to the people, rather than to the authorities, for guidance, for light. Criticising the old Congress leaders for their reluctance to face the masses he said, "they have made speeches, written loads of articles full of generalities and common platitudes, but how many of them can honestly say that they know of the condition of the masses by personal contacts".[159] He expressed his dissatisfaction with the working of some Indian institutions like Servants of India, Seva Samities, the volunteers in Bengal and in the Punjab. Being a social worker of long experience he was convinced that Indian masses need not sermons on the subtleties of Vedanta or Vairagya, nor lectures on self-governments, but right comradely association, brotherly sympathy, and easy, unsophisticated, unfettered communication, with their better educated and better situated countrymen.[160] After visiting the best part of the world he had come to the conclusion that Indian masses were comparatively more intelligent, more sober, more amenable to reason than any other people similarly situated. In a private letter from America, he wrote to Gandhi, "We have to make them (masses) conscious of their great potentialities by working with them in a spirit of cooperation and not working for them in a spirit of patronage".[161] Moreover, he felt that the cooperation of the poor classes like peasants and the workers was necessary for, the political emancipation of the country. He Frankly said, "All classes of people must feel that salvation will come from within with cooperation, mutual help and mutual trust and not from without, by endless, heartless, merciless and soulless competition, not by begging for favours and concessions".[162]

Another most important concept of Lajpat which he expressed in 1919 was to start an organisation in every district of India to make an economic survey of the country. This organisation, he felt, would prepare charts of minimum average standards of food and clothing required for a wealthy and efficient life with figures and facts.[163] The private correspondence of Lajpat Rai with Gandhi and Wedgwood in 1919 reveals his intention to launch a movement in India for economic purposes starting with the peasants and the labourers. He writes: "What is needed in India more than anything else is a movement from the peasant and the workingmen. Such a movement will, in course of time, reduce the religious cleavages. The Government in india ought to lay down a minumum standard of life, with a minimum wage rate and the taxes should regulated by capacity to pay".[164] Expressing his anguish over the British Indian taxation policy, he argued, "It is extremely unjust that a man possessing one acre of land should pay the same rate as a man possessing 5,000 or 50,000 acres". He added, "the higher the income the higher should be the tax, but in India it is just to the contrary".[165] He pointed out that the British Government had adopted the policy to keep the big landlord and the big banker on their side and the "leaders of the moderate school have never had the courage to raise this question".[166] He did not want to see religious factors in the way of India's future. His concept of labour movement on a modest scale also included the use of priest as centres of social work. For this purpose he said, "I would not destroy the Indian temples but I would destroy the authority of the priest".[167] Thus, Lajpat Rai had full faith in the Indian masses, peasants and working classes.

During Lajpat Rai's sojourn the American blacks were facing socio-economic problems. Despite the Civil War and Reconstruction of the South the Negroes in America wer victimised by the inferior facilities for schooling, housing, travelling, and working that segregation had imposed upon them. Worse still, the incidence of lynchings and race riots remained high. A few black intellectuals, led by W.E.B.Dubois, a Harvard Ph.D., in 1905 organised Nigara movement which was transformed in 1909 into the National Association for the Advancement of coloured people. The organisation worked for higher wages, equal protection under the law, and the chance to vote and hold political office. Yet white supremacists were determined "to keep the Negro in his place", by force if necessary and many of the applauded irresponsible statements of men like Congressmen James F. Byrnes of South Carolina, who warned that the Reds were inciting a black uprising in the South. Being social reformer and champion of liberty Lajpat Rai supported the cause of black American. It led to close relationship with Dr. W.E.B.DuBois, the leader of Negroes. They used to meet at DuBois "home and office" to discuss the social problems. Both were "the members of the same club". The Negro leader had "admiration for Lajpat Rai's restraint and sweet temper".[168] The comments of Indian leader on social status of black American were not liked by the Government of United States especially during the First World War. It is obvious from a letter of major U.S.R.; War Department, Office of the Chief of Staff, Washington to DuBois dated september 25, 1917, "Mr. Lajpat Rai seems anxious for trouble. Did anything of his address (delivered at Belport, Long Island) bear the negro question in this country?... I was wondering whether he was inclined to make trouble here as well as in the world generally".[169] DuBois reviewed a number of books written by Lajpat Rai in United States in his well known magazine Crisis.

In America Lajpat Rai closely studied the organisation of many educational institutions. One of these institutions was the New York Rand School of Sociology which imparted instruction in social sciences to people whose circumstances did not permit of their using the regular universities and colleges for improving and developing their knowledge of Politics, Economics and other Social Sciences. This institution was run more or less on the lines of self help. Lecturers were paid small honoraria from the fees collected. There was a small endowment fund, the income from which was utilized for house-rent and other miscellaneous charges. The Rand School was primarily and principally used by lower class people who needed instruction in rudiments and fundamentals and who were not economically in a position to pay a large fees. It was a centre of socialism. Lajpat Rai was also influenced by another school of social sciences which was established in New York in 1918. It was very well endowed by rich benefactors and realised fairly large sums of money as tuition fees. This one was primarily meant for advanced students who were already working as teachers, lecturers, professors, journalists, etc., and could afford to pay fairly large sums of money as fees. All these American institutions inspired Lalaji to form a plan for establishing a School of Politics somewhat on the lines of the Rand School of New York.[170] He founded Tilak School of Politics in India in December 1920.

The thirty-fourth Congress held at Amritsar in December 1919 praised the nationalistic activities of Lajpat Rai abroad. In a resolution it thankfully recognised the valuable services rendered by Lajpat Rai to the cause of the country by his earnest and self-sacrificing efforts of constitutional agitation in the United States of America by representing the views of the Congress before proper authorities in America in the matter of the demand for self-government and self-determination for India.[171] The eighth C.P. and Berar Conference held under the presidentship of Motilal Nehru on May 17, 1920 expressed profound appreciation of Lajpat Rai's selfless and invaluable services rendered during his stay in America.[172]

Meanwhile, Lajpat Rai's activities abroad were closely watched by the India Office in England. The widespread popularity of Lajpat Rai in American press created alarm and fear in India Office and in the British press. The Secretary of State began to think of the possibility of deporting Lajpat Rai from America and he sought the advice of the Viceroy on this delicate question. He asked "It is possible that arrangements for the deportation of Lajpat Rai... from the United States might be made. Do you desire this? If so, whether to India or some other country". "At present", he added, "Lajpat Rai appears to be very active and harmful publicist".[173] After consulting the Punjab Government and the advocate who was concerned with Lajpat Rai's deportation in 1907, the Viceroy replied that he did not favour the policy of deporting Lajpat Rai or bringing him to trial in India for he knew his popularity in the country and any action of this kind was bound to result in public excitement. He was "opposed strongly to his presence in this country (India), particularly just now".[174] "It is doubtful", the Viceroy wrote, "whether Lajpat Rai could be prosecuted in India and his prosecution and even his presence here would not arouse political excitement which is undesirable and of which he would be focus and be represented as political martyr by Extremists". He further added, "In view of the impression the trials have created it is probable that the Chicago and San Francisco convicts would be harmless in America for a considerable time to come... In these circumstances, it is not advisable to make any (Lajpat Rai's) deportation".[175]

Lajpat Rai's activities in America had also caused stir in the British press; the editor of London Daily Express wrote:

> I would like to call Mr. Montagu's attention to the pernicious activities of Lajpat Rai, the Indian agitator, who is doing his best in America to stir up anti-British sentiment. The Indian Home Rule League of America, at No.1400 Broadway, publishes a paper called Young India, in which Mr. Lajpat Rai indulges in the wildest harangues. Insult to the King, tears for Eugene Debs, who is in the prison for treason, and appeals to the Irish and Germans are a feature of his work. Is it not time that the people of United States were "put wise" regarding the position of this man, Lajpat Rai?[176]

So far as the Daily Express insinuations of appeals to Germans were concerned there was no truth in them. Lajpat Rai had disclaimed any cooperation with the Germans. He was, however, on friendly terms with Irish liberation organisations. They often invited Lajpat Rai and Hardikar to address their meetings, and passed resolutions favouring self-determination for India.

Lajpat Rai's activities in America also led to an interpellation in the House of Commons. Rt. Hon. Colonel Yale drew the attention of the Secretary of State for India to the activities of Lajpat Rai who was said to be doing his best to stir up anti-British sentiment in America, and inquired as to what steps were being taken in the matter. The Secretary of State gave the following reply: "I am aware and regret the efforts to misrepresent to the American public the character of British rule in India to which Hon. and gallant friend refer... Steps have been taken to counteract them".[177]

What the British characterised as "efforts to misrepresent... the character of British rule in India" was, in fact, the real education of American public regarding India's claim to self-government. The Secretary of State for India had not only taken steps to counteract Lajpat Rai's propaganda in the U.S. Press, but had also exerted pressure on the United States Government to prevent him from carrying on his work there. Because of this pressure Lajpat Rai had received considerable attention from the U.S.Police and the Department of Justice. Six times he was examined by them and almost always at length. His telephone was tapped, correspondence opened and for full one year and a half he lived in a house, apart of which was occupied by a detective in the employ of the U.S.Government. But, in spite of all this, Lajpat Rai acknowledged that on every occasion that the Department of Justice sent for him, due courtesy was shown by the officials.[178]

On January 22, 1919, Lajpat Rai made an application for his return to India via England and France. As mentioned earlier, he was very eager to return to his homeland. Though engaged in all sorts of valuable work in America, Lajpat Rai's mind, full of patriotic emotions, turned expectantly towards India. How at this stage his heart pined for India is narrated in a paragraph of his Young India for August 1919. He wrote: "I am exceedingly sorry that the Secretary of State's order prevents my going to India and England just when I wanted most to be there... Events are developing rapidly in India and every Indian who feels for his country and is desirous of taking part in its life must feel that his place is there, in the midst of his countrymen and not 12,000 miles away from home in a position of comparative safety, comfort and ease...I am overwhelmed with a sense of guilt at not being in India to play my part in the great struggle which my countrymen are carrying on against such great odds".[179] He was hopeful that the British might allow him to return to India. In a letter to Hardikar he expressed his hope thus: "I have received an acknowledgement of my application for passport from the British Military Mission in the U.S. They say it is under consideration. Who knows they may grant it".[180] But the India Office in Britain rejected the application without any reason. The fact was that the Government was aware of the political developments in India in 1919, and they did not want Lajpat Rai to be there. This move was bitterly criticised in the Indian press. In August 1919 Lajpat Rai again applied for a passport via England. The Secretary of State asked Chelmsford: "You are aware of his (Lajpat Rai's) lecture and press campaign in the United States. Its repetition is not desirable in the United Kingdom. It would be well to have him out of America. Would you agree to a passport direct to India?"[181] The Viceroy was not in favour to grant passport for fear of effect Lajpat Rai's presence might have in the Punjab. On September 21, 1919, the Viceroy wrote: "In view of the recent events it is very desirable that for the present he should be kept out of India, where his presence would constitute a danger to the public peace."[182] He rather preferred to keep Lajpat Rai in United Kingdom if the authorities had objection to his remaining in America. He believed that he "would do less harm in the United Kingdom than in India". Since the Secretary of State considered Lajpat Rai's prosecution in England as "impossible" he was impressing upon the Viceroy that prosecution against him could be launched in India. To this Chelmsford was strongly opposed and he characterised the measure as "very undesirable".[183] The India Office was also aware of the fact that persistent refusal to grant permission to Lajpat Rai to come to India was regarded as unjust and undemocratic. Consequently, the Secretary of State was thinking of allowing him to return to his native land. He wrote to the Viceroy: "We cannot indefinately refuse to grant a passport. He makes capital out of refusal to the injury of your Government".[184] The Government finally decided to grant him permission and on November 13, 1919, the British Control Officer, New York, informed Lajpat Rai that the British Government had authorised the New York Officer to grant him a passport to proceed from United States to India. He was, however, not allowed to return India via England.

According to M.N.Roy, Lala Lajpat Rai was repeatedly refused permission to return to India because the British Government regarded him as a German agent. "It was suspected", writes M.N.Roy "that while in America, he had established some conspiratorial contact with the Germans. Like all colonial nationalists he was of course pro-German but he was too cautious a man to be actively connected with any clandestine arrangements".[185] But this view is hardly correct.

As explained earlier, Lajpat Rai never approved of the methods of Indian revolutionaries in America who were making efforts to liberate India with the help of German money or arms. He had turned down all such overtures made to him. The British Government refused permission to Lajpat Rai to come to India not because they suspected him to be a German agent. The Government records unfold a different tale. The fact was that in view of increased political consciousness and activities in the post-war period in India, the British Government did not deem it desirable that a leader of Lajpat Rai's stature should come to India. They feared that his presence would further fan "public excitement".[186]

On the eve of Lajpat Rai's departure from the United States, a spate of farewell dinners proceeded. The League of Oppressed Peoples gave a dinner on November 28, 1919, at the Hotel des Artistes in New York. The League of Oppressed Peoples was an organization working for the freedom of the oppressed nationalisties like India, Ireland, Egypt, Korea, Persia and China. The Chairman of the League of Oppressed Peoples, Dudley Field Malone, formely Assistant

Secretary of State in the first Wilson Administration and then Collector of the Post of New York, introduced the Toastmaster, Oswald Garrison Villard, editor of the New York Nation. Speaking at the occasion Dudley F.Malone said:

> My fellow citizens,... tonight you have come together to say, I hope, brief farewell to a man who loves his people and his country, and the freedom of his people and his country, who loves liberty above anything and who, happily for them, is going back to them.[187]

Malone expressed his personal regret at Lajpat Rai's departure and compared him to those pioneers of liberty who had visited America, Pulaski, Lafayette, Kosciusko and Kossuth. He said that every time he had met Rai and grasped his hand and looked into the smile of his eyes, he had "felt some of the same thrill that ran through the blood of any American who had the fortune to shake the hand of Pulaski, or Lafayette, Kosciusko or Kossuth".[188]

Oswald Garrison Villard laid great stress on the point that America would follow Lajpat Rai with its thoughts wherever he was, and would watch the splendid work he did for freedom. He described Lajpat Rai as "a wise, brave and sound ambassador, a generous and moderate interpreter of great races to our American Democracy; a profound student of human liberties, with a heart responsive to the upward aspirations of mankind in every clime". He pleadged also the continued interest and help of America in India's struggle for freedom, quoting Richard Gobden's opinions to express the American attitude.[189]

Similarly, Dr. McCartan, the official envoy to the United States of the Republic of Ireland, expressed the fullest sympathy of Ireland with the cause of India and wished Lajpat Rai bon Voyage.[190] Later, Miss Soumy Toheng, a member of the Chinese Peace Delegation to Paris, spoke. She recalled that Dr. Sun Yatsen during the Chinese Revolution of 1911 replied to the delegate of an Indian society who brought him congratulations: "The torch of liberty which is burning now in China sheds its light upon far off India", and added "it is to be hoped that the light will become powerful and burst into flames".[191]

Pethick Lawrence of the English Labour Party, later Lord Pethick Lawrence, who was also present on the occasion described him as "a stateman compared with whom very few are equal". He said, "India could win freedom in more than one way; they can win freedom for themselves and then win hatred in their own hearts at the same time; but Mr. Lajpat Rai, as I understand him, and the wiser people in my country would rather see India win freedom - win it for herself, win it by action - win freedom and win friendship at the same time and friendship in her heart and friendship in our heart".[192]

B.S.Kamat, of the Bombay Legislative Council who was then in New York, also spoke. Among other prominent speakers of the evening was Dr. Norman Thomas, a New York Minister, who later blossomed into the foremost socialist leader of the United States. Dr. Thomas who had by then become one of Rai's closest friends, and one of the foremost American supporters of the League's activities, thanked Lajpat Rai for the lessons he had taught American, the lessons of what imperialism meant and the failure to which imperialism was doomed. Prof. A.V.Pope also spoke on the occasion.[193]

Lajpat Rai reciprocated the sentiment expressed at the meeting. He thanked the American Government, the liberal and radical press and the American people for their sympathy for India's cause and also the hospitality shown to him.

After farewell dinner was organised by the Indian residents of New York at the Taj Mahal Restaurant on November 30, 1919, which was attended by 100 persons, mostly Indians, and a few Americans interested in social and educational side of the Indian problem. Prominent among those present and who spoke were S.N.Karr, Swami Bodhananda, Dr. S.N.Bose, Dr. N.S. Hardikar, Taraknath Das, Miss Henrietta Rodman, Dr. Gilbert Reid, Checker, B.Doss, N.M.Joshi of the Servants of India Society, who was a member of the

Government of India delegation to the International Labour Conference, then in progress at Washington, D.C., Peter Golden, and Mohammad Azim. The main speaker of the evening was Taraknath Das, who eulogized Lajpat Rai's constitutional and constructive works in the United States. Later, on December 7, 1919, Lajpat Rai was feted by the Civic Club of New York.

Lajpat Rai started home journey via England where during a short stay he renewed his acquaintences with socialist friends, H.M.Hyndaman, Ramsay MacDonald, George Lansbury, Josiah Wedgewood, Benjamin Spoor, Arther Ponsonby, Beatrice Webb, Sidney Webb, Henry Nevinson, Henry Noel Brailsford, C.F.Andrews, Francis Robinson, V.H.Rutherford O'Grady, William Redmond, Frederic Mackarness, Bernard Shaw, etc.[194] Writing about his meeting with Bernard Shaw he wrote: "I also saw Bernard Shaw and had a very interesting chat with him for over 3/4 of an hour. Among other interesting things he said that England will lose its importance as soon as one is free".[195] The India Office imposed complete silence about Lajpat Rai stay in London. In fact they wanted early departure from the country. He left London on January 24, 1920 for home via France, Switzerland, Milan, Austria, Mosama (East African post) and Aden.[196] At Mosama he met Indian Muslim deputation (Khilafat Delegation) going to England headed by Mohammad Ali and Syed Hussain. They exchanged views and sought introductory letters from Lajpat Rai for his friends in England.[197] He asked them to take help of Hockett, Villard, Pope, Dundley Field Malone, Dr. Sunderland and Huebsch in U.S.A.

Thus, during the entire period of his stay in England, America and Japan, through writings, speeches, organisations and associations he gave a new dimension to the nationalistic cause of India. His pioneering work in U.S.A. was able to win moral support and sympathy of many citizens of America. One can say that by creating a favourable and sympathetic public opinion he prepared ground for subsequent American help in India's freedom.

Notes and References

1. Telegram, February 1, 1918, Secretary of State to Viceroy, Chelmsford Papers.

2. Central Intelligence Department (Political), Circular No.1, June 23, 1919, p. 32.

3. Ibid.

4. The Bombay Chronicle, June 20, 1914, Jayakar Papers (Microfilm).

5. Lajpat Rai's Autobiographical Fragment vide The People (Lahore), January 13, 1931.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Sohan Singh Josh in his book Tragedy of Komagata Maru also states that the Canadian immigration laws were made on the promptings of the British.

9. Ibid.

10. Central Intelligence Department, Circular No.1 (Political), June 23, 1919.

11. Ibid.

12. Young India (New York), Vol. 111, No.2, February 1920, pp. 35-36.

13. Sedition Committee Report, (Calcutta, 1918), p.22.

14. Lajpat Rai, Autobiographical Writings, p. 105.

15. Ibid.

16. Lajpat Rai's Autobiographical Fragment vide op. cit. April 13, 1929, p. 54.

17. Lajpat Rai's Diary, p. 3.

18. Ibid.p. 6.

19. Ibid., p. 11.

20. Ibid., p. 13.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. "Myself and the Indian revolutionaries" Lajpat Rai's last Autobiographical Fragment vide op. cit., April 13, 1929, p. 54.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid., April 13, 1929.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Lancelot Lawton, Empire of the East, Part II, (London, 1912), p. 804. In Tokyo Lajpat Rai was staying at the Imperial Hotel, but as he planned for a somewhat prolonged visit it was suggested that it would be cheaper to shift to a rented house. So, from the Imperial, he moved into a double storey Japanese style house in Koamicho in Hongo Ward, just behind the Third High School, close to the then site of the Imperial University.

29. Foreign and Political Department, G.O.I. (Secret), Nos. 11-18, February 1917.

30. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political), Nos. 227-229B, 1914.

31. J.B.Whitehead to W.Cunningham, June 28, 1900, Foreign Department, (Internal-B), Nos. 227-79, September 1900.

32. Foreign Department, G.O.I., Circular No.1 (Political), June 23, 1919.

33. Foreign Department, G.O.I. (External), No. 179, March, 1908.

34. Quoted in Feroz Chand, Lajpat Rai: Life and Work (New Delhi, 1978), p. 278.

35. Foreign Department, G.O.I. (Political), Nos. 11-18, February, 1917.

36. Central Intelligence Department, Circular No. 1 (Political), June 23, 1919, p. 44.

37. Lajpat Rai's Diary, p. 25.

38. Ibid.

39. Lajpat Rai, "Myself and the Indian Revolutionaries", Lajpat Rai's last Autobiographical Fragment vide op. cit., p. 55.

40. Lajpat Rai's Diary, p. 29.

41. J.S.Dhanki (ed.), The Story of My Life by Lala Lajpat Rai (Delhi, 1978), p. 55.

42. "Myself and the Indian Revolutionaries", Lajpat Rai's last Autobiographical Fragment vide, op. cit.

43. "Japan's Policy tpwards India, 1915-17", F.O.371/3424, p. 327.

44. Soma Kokkoh, "Bose and Toshiko", in Radhanath Rath, pp. 27-37.

45. Despatch 5, Green to Sir Edward Grey, Tel. 489, December 2, 1915, F.O.371/2497, p. 281.

46. Letter, January 17, 1916, Lajpat rai to Lippman, Lippman Papers.

47. Lajpat Rai, Reflections on the Political Situation in India, (Place and date not mentioned), p. 2 (Microfilm).

48. Ibid., p. 9.

49. Lajpat Rai, Reflections on the Political Situation in India, (Place and date not mentioned), p. 9.

50. Lajpat Rai's article was written in Lahore in 1914 before his departure to England and America.

51. Quoted in Don Dignan, The Indian Revolutionary Problem in British Diplomacy 1914-1919 (New Delhi, 1983), p. 59.

52. Central Intelligence Department, Circular No. 1 (Political), June 23, 1919.

53. Lajpat Rai's Diary, p. 27.

54. Keshoram Sabarwal, A Reminiscence, in Radhanath Rath, p. 550. Also see Don Dignan, op. cit.

55. Letter, January 17, 1916, Lajpat Rai to Lippman, Lippman Papers.

56. Japanese student to Lajpat Rai, Vide Home Department (Political-B) Nos. 445-448, May, 1917.

57. Lajpat Rai, The Evolution of Japan and Other Papers (Calcutta, 1918), p. 8.

58. Lajpat Rai's Diary, p. 32.

59. Ibid., p. 49.

60. Ibid., p. 44.

61. In May 1916, it was reported that Lajpat Rai had a scheme for organising a colony of Indians in South Africa and was trying to collect money from Indians in Africa for the purpose. Vide Central Intelligence Department (Political), Circular No.1, June 23, 1919.

Lajpat Rai himself writes: "We started a proposal of sending a man to south Africa to study the chances of Indian colonization there. Dr. K.D. Shastri and K.Rakshit were cooperating, Vide Lajpat Rai's Diary.

62. Letter 11 December 1914, Hardikar to Lajpat Rai, Hardikar Papers.

63. Letter, December 15, 1914, Lajpat Rai, to Hardikar, Hardikar Papers.

64. Ibid.

65. Lajpat Rai's Diary. See also K.Sampathagiri Rao, Gray But Fresh (Dr. N.S.Hardikar Diamond Jubilee Trust, Hubli, n.d.) p. 61.

66. Quoted in A.C.Bose, Indian Revolutionaries Abroad (Patna, 1971) p. 188.

67. L.P.Mathur, Indian Revolutionary Movement in the United States of America (New Delhi, 1970), p. 125.

68. Central Intelligence Department, Circular No. I (Political), June 23, 1919.

69. K.D.Bhosekar was an old Bombay suspect, then studying at Berkeley University, and was the representative of the Indian Home Rule League on the Pacific Coast. See. N.S.Hardikar, Lajpat Rai in America, op. cit., p. 13.

70. Ibid.

71. Letter, February 21, 1919, Lajpat Rai to Hardikar, Hardikar Papers.

72. Letter, March 12, 1919, Lajpat Rai to Hardikar, Ibid.

73. Since the inception of Indian Home Rule League of America, in 1917, to the end of June 1920, a period of about 31 months, the League had received approximately $18,000, including the $6,000 sent by Tilak. Vide A.I.C.C. F.No.17/1920.

74. The money was given by Tilak to Mrs. Besant, who sent it in the form of a draft to A.P.Warrington of the American Theosophical Society by the hands of Miss Mary Neff who was travelling from

India to America. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political), No. 55, 1919.

75. N.S.Hardikar, op. cit., p. 13.

76. Ibid., p. 14.

77. Ibid., p. 15.

78. K.Sampathagiri Rao, Gray But Fresh (Dr. N.S. Hardikar Diamond Jubilee Trust, Hubli, n.d.), pp. 62-63.

79. R.C.Majumdar, History of Freedom Movement in India, Vol. II, (Calcutta, 1963), p. 381.

80. Letter, August 13, 1920, Lajpat Rai to Hardikar, Ibid.

81. Ibid.

82. Letter, July 5, 1925, J.T.Sunderland to Lajpat Rai, Sunderland Papers.

83. Quoted in D.P.Singh, American Attitude Towards Indian National Movement, (Delhi, 1974), p. 178.

84. Ibid.

85. "Dr. Hardikar's Middle West Trip", Young India, Vol. 11, No.6, June 1919, pp. 138-39.

86. "League's Activities", Ibid, No. 5, May, 1919, pp. 108-09; also see p. 105.

87. Ibid., p. 120.

88. Young India, Ibid., No. 2, February 1919, p. 37.

89. Ibid.

90. Ibid.

91. Lajpat Rai, Young India (New York, 1916), pp. 17-41.

92. Lajpat Rai, Young India (New York, 1916), p. 48.

93. Ibid., pp. 75-78.

94. Young India (New York), February, 1918.

95. Ibid., March, 1918.

96. Letter, September 18, 1919, Tilak to Khaparde, Khaparde Papers.

97. "Indian Before the Senate", Young India, October 1919, Vol. II, No.10, p. 219.

98. In March 1924, Mohammad Faiyez Khan, member of the Central Legislative Assembly of India, inquired from the Government of India whether the said Rustomji was receiving remuneration for his work in the United States, and Sir Malcolm Hailey, the Home Member of the G.G.'s Executive Council, replied in the affirmative that Rustomji was receiving government allowances for that purpose.

99. Letter, Rustomji to Senator Lodge and to the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relation, NA, R.D.S., index No. 845, 00/247.

100. United States Congressional Record, Vol. 58, Part 4, pp. 4042-4043.

101. Ibid.

102. Ibid, Part 7, pp. 6607-6609.

103. Ibid.

104. "Senator France on India", Young India, Vol. II, No. 12, December, 1919, p. 278.

105. "Opinions on Young India", Ibid, Vol. II, No.10, October, 1919, p. 227.

106. "Some opinion on Young India", Ibid., No.9, September, 1919, p. 214.

107. Editorial Notes, "Threatened Deportation of Hindus" Ibid., No. 7, July 1919, p. 147.

08. New York Times, June 19, 1919, Cigar makers Progressive International Union of Brooklyn, N.Y. also emphatically protested against the threatened deportation of Hindu revolutionaries. The resolution which was adopted by the Union on August 30, 1919, and a copy of which was sent to President Wilson, expressed the principle of political asylum to political refugees from other countries was basic to American Tradition since 1776, and hence, the threatened deportation of Indian revolutionaries whose only crime was their urge for freedom and their determination to fight Britain's economic exploitation and boundage amounted to flagrant violation of the spirit of American democracy. The resolution urged the U.S.President to do every thing to stop such persecution.

109. "The Deportation", Young India, Vol. 11, September 1919, p. 195.

110. N.S.Hardikar, op. cit., p. 13.

111. The following is an extract from the foreword written by Col. Wedgewood:

"Englishmen must make up their minds about India. The days when we could lull our principles to sleep with vague talk about our beneficient rule, about a people unfitted for Government, about protecting the non-military classes from violence and tyranny are past... If we are going to rule India in the future, as in the past, in the teeth of the wishes of the people, then we are Prussians. Then we must use force, fraud cajolery and hate, and then in the long run we shall go down with our good name dammed for ever... The alternative is Home Rule. Unless Liberalism can so erase the present feeling towards Englishmen in India, the alternative will be independence... That is my first reason for welcoming the book... Even Prussians cannot keep 315 millions of people always uneducated, and with education comes criticism, even the desire for self-government. That brings me to my second reason for liking this book. I know nothing of Lajpat Rai but what he has written here, but it is the book of a man. he is a hator of injustice, oppression, a living flame of which liberation of all ages will justly be proud". India (London), October 26, 1917. See also Home Department,G.O.I. (Political), May 1918, Nos. 36-54 and K.W.

112. Telegram (Secret), November 30, 1916, Secretary of State to Viceroy, Chelmsford Papers. See also Letter, Lajpat Rai to George Lansbury, Secretary Home Rule for India League, November 23, 1917, vide India (London), November 1917.

113. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political), Deposit No. 192-194, 1924.

114. "An open letter to the Hon'ble David Lloyd George" vide Lajpat Rai's Writings and Speeches, Vol.I, pp. 262-63.

115. Ibid.

116. Ibid.,p. 186.

117. Ibid., p. 276.

118. Ibid.

119. Ibid., p. 287.

120. U.S.Department of State, Washington, Decimal Files 811. 911/Polk to Gregory, December 13, 1917. See also Anil Baran Ganguly, Ghadar Revolution in India (Delhi, 1980), pp. 95-96.

121. Ibid, 811. 911/64. British Embassy to the Department of State, January 2, 1918; and U.S.National Archives and Records Service, Department of Justice - File No. 9-10-3/563, Polk to Attorney General, January 8, 1918.

122. Ibid.

123. Letter, January 3, 1918, Lajpat Rai to Huebsch, Huebsch Papers.

124. The Nation (New York), March 14, 1918.

125. Letter, February 3, 1919, Lajpat Rai to Colonel Wedgwood, Wedgwood Papers.

126. Ibid.

127. N.S.Hardikar, op. cit., p. 41.

128. Ibid.

129. Ibid.

130. Lajpat Rai's last Autobiographical Fragment, vide op. cit February 22, 1931.

131. Ibid.

132. Ibid.

133. Ibid.

134. Lajpat Rai, "Congress Politics in 1914", The People, November 14, 1929.

135. Lajpat Rai, The Political Future of India (New York, 1919) p.v.

136. Lajpat Rai's Writings and Speeches, Vol. I, p.253.

137. Ibid.

138. Percival, Spear, India (University of Michigan Press, 1961), pp. 337-346.

139. Montaqu Chemsford Report, p. 15.

140. The New Republic (New York), September 3, 1919, p, 156.

141. Report of the Thirtieth I.N.C.., Lucknow, 1916, p. 85.

142. Report of the Thirtieth I.N.C., Lucknow, 1916, p. 85.

143. Parliamentary Debates (Commons) Vol. XCVIL (London 1917), p. 1695.

144. Lajpat Rai, India's Will to Freedom (Madras, 1921), pp. 23-24.

145. Letter, February 3, 1919, Lajpat Rai to Wedgwood, Wedgwood Papers.

146. From Montagu, August 7, 1918, Chelmsford Papers.

147. The Tribune, February 28, 1920.

148. Letter, August 13, 1919, Lajpat Rai to Gandhi, Gandhi Papers.

149. Ibid.

150. Letter, August 20, 1919, Gandhi to Lajpat Rai, Ibid.

151. Letter, May 21, 1919, Chelmsford to H.H.Emperor, Chelmsford Papers.

152. Lajpat Rai paid glorious tribute to Duni Chand of Lahore thus: "Where in the land of the five rivers is a person nobler, truer, purer and bolder than Dunichand. Having neither wealth, nor excessive talents, nor an extended practice at this back, the man has fought single-handed for high principles and noble practices, for the rights of the poor against the rich, for pure democracy, against great odds. I have had the priviledge of working with him in the Municipal Committee, in the Indian Association and in the Congress, and I truthfully say that I never came across a more disinterested and high minded public man than Duni Chand". Letter, Lajpat Rai to Young Punjab vide The Tribune, September 26, 1919.

153. Lajpat Rai, "India's Silent Revolution", editorial in the New Republic (New York), November 19,

1919, p. 356.

154. *Ibid*.

155. Letter, Tilak to Lajpat Rai, vide Young India, Vol. 11, June 1919, p. 136,. Also see letter, January 11, 1919, Tilak to Lajpat Rai, *Hardikar Papers*.

156. Letter, January 17, 1919, Lajpat Rai to Wedgwood, *Wedgwood Papers*. See also Letter, January 11, 1919, Tilak to Lajpat Rai, *Tilak Papers*.

157. Letter, February 3, 1919, Wedgwood to Lajpat Rai, *Wedgwood Papers*.

158. Letter, March 14, 1919, Lajpat Rai to Hardikar, *Hardikar Papers*.

159. Letter, Lajpat Rai to Gandhi, July 1919 vide *Young India*, November 12, 1919.

160. *Ibid*.

161. *Ibid*.

162. Letter, October 20, 1919, Lajpat Rai to Gandhi, vide *Ibid*., December 17, 1919.

163. *The Young India*, November 12, 1919.

164. Letter, February 3, 1919, Lajpat Rai to Wedgwood, *Wedgwood Papers*.

165. *Ibid*.

166. *Ibid*.

167. *Ibid*.

168. Letter, January 10, 1929, W.E.B.DuBois to the Editor of the *People*, *DuBois Papers*.

169. Letter, September 25, 1917, Major U.S.R; Office of staff to DuBois, ibid.

170. The People (Lahore), March 7, 1926.

171. Report of the Thirty-Fourth I.N.C., Amritsar 1919, p. 43.

172. A.I.C.C. File No. 19/1920.

173. Telegram (Secret), February 1918, Secretary of State to Viceroy, Chelmsford Papers.

174. Telegram, July 14, 1918, Viceroy to Secretary of State, Chelmsford Papers.

175. Ibid.

176. Young India (New York), July 1919, Vol. II, No.7, p. 148.

177. op. cit.

178. Ibid.

179. Young India (New York), May 1919, Vol. II, No.5, p. 111.

180. Letter, February 24, 1919, Lajpat Rai to Hardikar, Hardikar Papers.

181. Telegram, July 25, 1919, Secretary of State to Viceroy, Chelmsford Papers.

182. Telegram, September 26, 1919, Viceroy to Secretary of State, Ibid.

183. Ibid.

184. Ibid.

185. Roy, M.N., Memoirs (Bombay, 1964), p. 5.

186. Lajpat Rai's Writings and Speeches, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 313.

187. *Young India*, Vol. 111, No. 1, January 1920, p. 11.

188. *Ibid*., No. 2, February, 1920, p. 28.

189. *Ibid*., pp. 29-30.

190. *Young India*, Vol. 111, No. 1, January 1920, p. 12.

191. *Young India*, Vol. 11, No. 2, February 1920, p.31.

192. *Ibid*., pp. 31-32.

193. *Ibid*., pp. 13-14.

194. Letter, Lajpat Rai to Huebsch, January 28, *Huebsch Papers*.

195. *Ibid*.

196. Letter, February 13, 1920, Lajpat Rai to Hardikar, *Hardikar Papers*.

197. *Ibid*.

198. *Ibid*.

Chapter 5

FIRST MASS ANTI-COLONIAL STRUGGLE AND LAJPAT RAI, 1920-22

The period from 1920 to 1922 is of momentous importance in the history of Modern India. For the first time the idea of non-violent non-cooperation was introduced and applied as a method of political struggle and as a means of national liberation. Under the dynamic leadership of Mahatma Gandhi the Indian nationalist struggle assumed an unprecedented force and appeal; in reality it becomes for the first time a mass anti-colonial struggle. Prior to the birth of the movement, the nationalist struggle of India was restricted only to the urban intelligentia living in large cities and towns, but after its initiation into Indian politics the national movement acquired for the first time a broad base in the masses of the country. Hindus and Muslims submerged their differences and unity between the two communities became for the first time an accomplished fact. Lajpat Rai on his return to India threw himself heart and soul into this movement. He strived hard to make the non-cooperation movement a success in the country particularly in the Punjab.

On February 20, 1920, Lajpat Rai landed on the Indian soil after an absence of nearly six years. Soon after his arrival, Indian leaders such as Tilak and V.J.Patel, were keen to know his future plans. As Lajpat Rai agreed with many of Gandhi's ideas and had great regard for him as a man, he decided to meet him before taking any decision. Lajpat Rai made clear to Tilak that: "he must be given some time to study the position of different parties in India and he will go to Delhi for a day (say February 24, 1920) to meet Gandhi there".[1] In this connection S.L.Karandikar, a close associate and biographer of B.G.Tilak writes: "During his conversation with Lajpat Rai, Tilak felt that Lajpat Rai was not in complete know of the responsive co-operation policy and he feared that Lajpat Rai might be influenced by Gandhi. He, therefore, wrote to Khaparde in Delhi to be in constant touch with Lajpat Rai in Delhi. Tilak warned Kharparde "take care that Mr. Gandhi does not influence him the other way".[2] However, he was very anxious to visit Punjab as early as possible.[3] He was acclaimed a hero when he reached Lahore five days later.

Soon after his arrival Lajpat Rai studied the situation in India and discussed it with numerous friends. India of 1920 was radically different from India which he had left in 1914. In a strictly confidential letter dated April 26, 1920 to Col. Wedgwood, Member of British Parliament, Lajpat Rai wrote, "It is an entirely new India to which I have come back; it is an awakened, self-concious and defiant India". Giving his impressions after visiting 12 districts of his province he added, "It was a new born, a vigorous and a spirited Punjab that hailed me back... From my reading of the situation I conclude that the Punjab masses are thoroughly discontented and the Government has not a friend among them... The Mussalmans are of course very bitter, the Hindus sullen and the Sikhs thoroughly dissatisfied". "Yet I am confident", assured Lajpat Rai to the British M.P., "the masses will not commit any violence unless provoked".[4] But he frankly made it clear that "they (masses) will not voluntarily help the Government in any emergency, which may soon occur if the Afghans venture to attack India on the N.W.F. The Mussalmans will actively sympathise and Hindus will silently watch".[5] The Lala described the situation "very critical" because the people were not "prepared to be bullied, insulted, exploited and commandered by the bureaucracy".[6] Thus, wrote Lajpat Rai to his British friend about new India shortly after his return to India.

The First World War exploded the myth of British superiority and generated among the Indian a new feeling of self-confidence and dignity. The country underwent a mental revolution as a result of the War which, though fought far away from its borders, affected deeply its economic life and its politics. The Bolshevik Revolution and President Wilson's declarations of War aims of the Allies spurred the urge among the Indians for self-government. India now demanded self-government as their fundamental right on the basis of the principle of self-determination proclaimed loudly by the Allied leaders during the War. They had expected a generous gesture from the Government for all that India had suffered for the Empire during the War. On the contrary, the Government adopted a policy of stark repression. The post-war repression legislation (the Rowlatt Acts), the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy and the inadequate reforms all combined to result in widespread indignation against the British rule. The Mohammedans, too, were restive. Firstly, the reform proposals had not given them extra communal weightage they had hoped for, and secondly, they anticipated the disruption of Turkey which aroused intense feeling among them. A sense of common danger brought the two communities together, and Hindu and Muslim fraternized on a scale never witnessed before in India. In this connection Lajpat Rai writes, "The Hindus are with the Muhammedans, for one reason among other that they have so often been neglected and insulted and bullied that they feel under no obligation to Government to side with it in this controversy. I have reason to think that the Hindu-Moslem entente has come to say. Never again can the Moslems be reconciled with the Government in spite of what their office seeking leaders may say and do. Every Moslem is at heart a rebel today. The disaffection is spreading and is requires all the sagacity of Mr. Gandhi and of other leaders to keep them in hand".[7] The leadership passed into new hands and a new technique of agitation came into vogue. It was a new vista. The new technique, Satyagraha, launched with protest meetings and hartals by Mahatma Gandhi, received a massive support of the masses, Hindu and Muslim alike. The Punjab was seething with discontent and violent anti-British sentiment on account of Jallianwala Bagh tragedy and the repressive policy of the Government. Lajpat Rai's old friends faced inquiries and transportation.[8] This act of unrestrained brutality and the horrors of the martial law regime in the Punjab roused the country to a bitter determination to fight the alien rule. In the light of these events the British offer of constitutional reforms sounded empty and hollow. Though the country was tense with emotion at the end of 1919, the Congress still did not want to widen the breach. At its Amritsar Session in December 1919, it decided, under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi, to work the reforms though declaring the Reform Act as "inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing".

Lajpat Rai thus found India in the throes of a militant national struggle. What gave him hope was the political awakening of the masses and the new born sentiment of unity among the Hindus and Muslims.[9] Though he was not satisfied with the Reform Act but he was "in favour of working the Reforms in a genuine spiritof co-operation", provided that was made possible by the Government.[10] He, however, doubted the intentions of the bureaucracy since it had excluded the nationalists from any participation in the framing of the Rules under the Act.

The air was blowing in favour of the non-cooperation programme and Khilafat issue in 1920. The Khilafat day was observed on March 19 of that year. Hakim Ajmal Khan returned to the Viceroy the Kaisar-i-Hind Gold Medal. Gandhi also returned his Kaisar-i-Hind Gold medal, Zula War Medal and Boer War Medal. On March 14, the Central Khilafat Committee endorsed Non-cooperation and it had already started propaganda in its favour. On March 22, three days meeting was held at which Gandhi, Malaviya, Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Patel, Khaparde and fifteen Muslim leaders were present. Here a Committee composed of Gandhi, Lajpat Rai, Ajmal Khan, Shuakat Ali and Azad examined the Central Khilafat Committee's programme. Besides other things, Lajpat Rai stressed on the Swadeshi.[11]

Then the publication of the Turkish peace terms on May 14 produced a blaze of resentment among every section of the Muslim community and gave a new dimention to the Khilafat agitation. Under the peace terms, Turkey was to be shorn of its Arab possessions -

Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia and Hijaz, and other Turkish provinces in the Arab peninsula. The portion on the Asiastic and European shores of the Bosphorus was to be internationalised. The other half, extending from St. Stefane to Dalma Bagtche, was declared a post of international interest under a Commission in which Turkey was not even represented. In effect, the peace terms proposed to sever from Turkey provinces and districts predominantly inhabited by the Turks, and to impose suzerainty over the Turkish sovereign which, according to the Indian Muslims, would effect his status and prestige as the religious head of the community. Finally, the terms were designed to retain the protectorate of the sacred cities of Islam in non-Muslim hands.

Indian Muslims regarded these terms as a blow to their religious feelings and sentiments. They formed a Khilafat Committee to carry on the struggle against injustice done to Turkey by the Treaty of Sevres. Gandhi described the peace proposals as a 'staggering blow' to the Indian Muslims and declared non-cooperation as the 'only effective remedy... for healing the wounds inflicted on Mohammedan opinion'.[12] Lala Lajpat Rai supported the Khilafat Movement for three main reasons. Firstly, because it involved a universal principle of religious freedom, secondly, because it exposed a treacherous breach of promise by the British Government and thirdly, because he wanted to show Hindu-Muslim unity to the bureaucracy. He declared that the Khilafat issue provided a unique opportunity to the congress "to convince our Muslim brothers that we were and are sincere in our desire for Muslim friendship". He added: "Hindu-Muslim unity betokens the dawn of a new day in the history of India and it will be extremely foolish and short sighted to throw this chance which comes once perhaps in a century on the bidding of those who worship at the shrine of Dyerism".[13]

The turning point came in the spring of 1920. The Hunter Committee Report issued on May 26, 1920 and the steps which the Government of India and the Secretary of State took thereupon eroded whatever faith was left in Indian minds regarding British professions of justice. The Committee was divided on racial lines and the Government accepted the views of the European majority. Far from condemning the ghastly act of cruelty, the Anglo-Indians and the British public expressed sympathy for Dyer. The resolution of the House of Lords in his support further embittered feelings in India.

Lajpat Rai was perceptive enough to gauge the depth of feeling of his countrymen and visualized the possibilities of political disturbances in the days to come. In a letter to Wedgwood, he expressed his reaction candidly: "I sincerely believe that I cannot afford to have chaos and disorder in our country at this stage of our evolution. There are elements in India who may rise equal to the occasion if any disorder does appear but still I would prefer ordered progress with the certainty of our getting complete responsible government in India as integral part of the British Commonwealth in the near future than run the risk of being thrown into a whirlpool of opposing and contending forces".[14]

In May Lajpat Rai started editing the influential Urdu Daily Bande Mataram in the Punjab to disseminate his ideas on politics, economics and sociology. His paper was parallelled in circulation (about 5,000 copies) only by the English Daily Tribune, edited by K.N.Roy, who stood for a mellowed extremism like the Amrita Bazar Patrika of Calcutta. Through this paper he advocated the Khilafat agitation and gave qualified support to Gandhi's programme of non-cooperation. He advised the Muslim leaders who had not yet descended into the arena to join the agitation to select those points of Gandhi's programme which they found practicable.[15] But soon after giving this advice he expressed doubts as to whether Hindus and Muslims had enough moral courage to act upon Gandhi's programme.[16]

The All India Congress Committee met at Banaras on May 31, 1920 to take a decision on hunter Committee Report. At the special invitation of the President, Lajpat Rai was also present. Before this Lajpat Rai made it clear that he would "accept the Congress programme on the whole".[17] The Committee was the only authority qualified to summon an extraordinary session of the Congress wherever it might deem it advisable to hold such session, and it could also change the venue of the Congress to some other town when such change was deemed by it to be necessary or desirable owing to serious or unforeseen difficulties or other contingencies of the like nature.[18] This Committee appointed Lajpat Rai and six others to draft a petition which was to be presented to the British Parliament expressing A.I.C.C.'s "indignant protest against the general policy and attitude of the Secretary of State for India on the Punjab affairs as disclosed in the Despatch on the Hunter Committee's report and against the acceptance of its recommendation".[19] Here Lajpat Rai was appointed a member of the Sub-Committee alongwith twenty-two others to collect funds for propaganda and other work in connection with the wrongs of the Punjab.[20] It also passed a resolution that the special session of the Indian National Congress would be held at Calcutta in September 1920.[21]

In this A.I.C.C. meeting Lajpat Rai made a special effort to redress the grievances of the Punjab people. He emphatically urged the Congress leaders that a "special reference to the Punjab should be made".[22] This was accepted.

Lajpat Rai was elected in July 1920 to preside over the special session of the Indian National Congress scheduled to meet at Calcutta. The session had been called to devise measures for the redress of the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs and to decide on the Congress attitude towards the reforms. Before the special Congress met, and even before Gandhi announced his programme of non-cooperation Lajpat Rai repudiated the Reforms and proposed the boycott of the new councils.[23] For himself, he declared in unequivocal terms that he would not stand for election. The acceptance of the majority report of the Hunter Committee by the Government of India and the Secretary of State was regarded by Lajpat Rai as the virtual denial of the principles on which the Reforms scheme was based. The officers who were responsible for committing horrid atrocities in the Punjab continued to hold offices and this confirmed his belief that no change in the old regime was contemplated.[24]

The opinion of the Punjab leaders was, however, divided. Harkishan Lal and Fazl-i-Husain were among the prominent members who felt that an unconstitutional agitation, of the kind embodied in the Non-Cooperation programme, was not in the best interest of the country.[25] But other leaders like Saif-ud-din Kitchlew, Duni Chand, Lahore, Satyapal and Rambhaj Dutt were in favour of the passive resistance movement. Like his mentor, Jinnah, Fazl-i-Husain did not approve of the Non-Cooperation programme, and offered to co-operate with the Government in the working of the Reforms.[26] The Punjab Congress members were similarly divided over the question of the Khilafat. Gokul Chand Narang considered it (Khilafat) a purely communal matter, having nothing to do with Indian Nationalism.[27] The Tribune, in its editorial, pointed out that Lajpat Rai's approval of the Non-cooperation movement should not be explained in terms of the Khilafat. It added, "the basis of the movement, must be one affecting the fundamental rights and the interests of the whole community and not as in the case of Khilafat, the religious interest of one single component part of it".[28]

Later, however, these differences were brushed aside. The Punjab Provincial Committee[29] accepted the principle of Non-Cooperation at its meeting on August 8, 1920, which was endorsed by the Punjab Provincial Conference in October 1920. A Non-Cooperation Committee was formed in the province and it included members from the Congress, Muslim League and the newly formed Khilafat Committee.[30]

Gandhi's announcement of his programme of Non-Cooperation in July 1920 caused shivers among many old Moderate Congress leaders. They shrank from such a revolutionary course. This nearly created a schism in the Congress camp. Anxious to avoid such a possibility, Lajpat Rai issued an appeal to the Moderates urging for unity and asking them to attend the special session at Calcutta.[31] Surendra nath Banerjee turned down the invitation in the following letter to Lajpat Rai:

> You are a convinced non-cooperationist, most of the Provincial Congress Committees declared themselves in favour of non-cooperation. Under the circumstances I feel that my presence at the Congress can serve no useful purpose since mine will be a voice crying in this wilderness.[32]

Surendra Nath Banerjee and other Moderate leaders such as Srinivasa Sastri, Narayan G. Chandavarkar, D.E.Wacha, C.Y.Chintamani, etc., did not respond to Lajpat Rai's appeal. They boycotted the special session of the Congress held at Calcutta (September 1920). Lajpat Rai regretted that the Moderates were opposed to the Non-Cooperation and that the Nationalists remained in a state of uncertainty.[33]

In view of these political developments in the Congress, the Government of India prescribed "Non-interference" as the "wisest policy". A Government circular dated September 4, 1920 said: "The non-co-operation scheme is no intrinsically foolish that Government have every confidence that the common sense of India will reject it... For the time being the policy of non-interference is the wisest policy. They (The Government of India) think that it would be a mistake at the present juncture either to adopt repressive measures of an executive nature under special or emergency laws against the leaders of the movement or even to institute immediate proceedings against them under the ordinary criminal law because any such action would only result in making martyrs of them, and gaining for them a large number of adherents who would otherwise hold aloof".[34] But the Government were watching the political situation very closely, Lajpat Rai's election as the President of the special Congress perturbed the British. In a cable to the Secretary of State, the Viceroy wrote: "Lajpat Rai has now been declared the elected President of the Special Session. His election will no doubt give support to the Non-Cooperation Movement".[35]

The key note of the special session of the Congress which was attended by about 25,000 delegates, visitors and spectators, was Gandhi's resolution for complete Non-Cooperation including surrender of titles and honorary offices and resignation from nominated seats in local bodies; refusal to attend Government Levees, Durbars, and other official and semi-official functions held by Government officials in their honour.[36] Gandhi promised independence in one year provided complete Non-Cooperation was adopted.

The presidential address of Lajpat Rai was a marvellous performance and it elicited admiration from one and all for its frankness, boldness and elegance. It was an impressive well reasoned and bitter indictment of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and his regime. He charged Sir Michael O'Dwyer for all the atrocities and brutalities that had been inflicted on the Punjab. In a very forceful language Lajpat Rai strongly condemned his and his subordinates' cruel and humiliating misdeeds which had transgressed all bounds of decency. The bulk of his speech was devoted to an exposure of what he called the Punjab atrocities.

In his speech, Lajpat Rai spoke of the "critical times" through which India and the world were passing,

> the minds of men are in ferment not only in this country of ours, but all over the world. Ideals, ideas, principles, convictions, sentiments, opinions, beliefs, creed and all things for which men have so far lived and fought are in the melting pot. Democracy is in the air but not that democracy which has brought the old world near its end in one great war. We are promised a new kind of democracy which would make no distinctions of colour, creed, caste, civilization or culture. It would recognise no barriers between man and man which are the outcome of social distinctions.[37]

In the address, he remained "non-committed on the Non-Cooperation question". On the question of Khilafat, which was worrying seventy million Indian Muslims, Lajpat Rai concerned himself only with the political aspect of the problem, leaving the religious aspect to the Muslims themselves. He sensed great danger in the extension of British influence as a result of the Turkish Peace Treaty: "I maintain that any further extension of the British Empire in Asia is deterimental to the interests of India and fatal to the liberties of the human race. The British have frequently used Indian troops to conquer various parts of Asia and Africa... British suzeraintly in Arabia and British occupation of Mesopotamia involves the practical absorption of Persia and Central Asia and perhaps, later of Afghanistan as well , into the British Empire".[38]

Lajpat Rai believed that as a result, the general public in those countries would be disarmed and some of them would be enlisted in the army. This would leave the way open for raising Arabian, Persian and Afghan regiments and then placing them in India to the detriment of India's freedom. Lajpat Rai, therefore, argued, "If the British Imperialist has no scruples in using Indian troops in Egypt, Persia, Arabia, Mesopotamia, Syria and Central Asia, why will he have any in using the troops he raises in these countries against us? The Hindu-Muslim problem will become ten times more troublesome and dangerous, if this turns out to be true".[39] This was the new dimension that Lajpat Rai tried to give to the Khilafat movement. He did not lose sight of another aspect of this problem. He held that if the Muslim population of these countries continued its resistance against the British forces, India would be burdened with enormous expenditure in footing the bill of the British campaigns. if these territories were to come under the British Empire as mandates, then also, they would cause a heavy drain on Indian resources, both human and economic. And he knew that both the League of Nations and the United States would be eventually unconcerned about solving these crucial problems arising out of the World War I".[40]

Lajpat Rai thus, justified the need for Hindu-Muslim unity. A closer understanding between tbe two communities was the call of the hour. There was no sense in playing into the hands of the British bureaucrats whose policy was to divide and rule. The bureacracy was alarmed at the successful expression of Hindu-Muslim unity over the Amritsar tragedy as well as the Khilafat movement.[41]

As regards the Montford Reforms, Lajpat Rai believed along with others that the rules and regulations and the decisions of the Joint Select Committee of the British Parliament had taken away the content of the Reforms. To him, the Reforms Act was disappointing.[42]

Lajpat Rai did not completely agree with Gandhi's programme of Non-Cooperation Movement for he had his own "personal opinion on the question". Kanji Dwarkadas writes:

> ... Motilal Nehru, who had come to meet Jinnah at the Howrah station told him in my presence that Gandhiji wanted to pass a non-cooperation resolution and that this would mean boycott of the legislature and he suggested to Jinnah that all of them together i.e. Jinnah, Malaviya, C.R. Das, Lajpat Rai, Motilal Nehru, Mrs. Besant and others should combine to defeat the resolution.[43]

Jawaharlal Nehru agreed with this account when he wrote that "Lala Lajpat Rai was not alone in this opposition; he had a great and impressive company with him. Indeed, almost the entire old Guard of the Congress opposed Gandhi's resolution on Non-Cooperation.[44]

The fundamental difference between Lajpat Rai and Gandhi appeared on the execution of the programme of Non-Cooperation. Though endorsing Gandhi's method of non-violent struggle for attaining Swaraj, Lajpat Rai was not in favour of launching the whole programme of non-cooperation immediately as framed by Gandhi. He held that the programme of non-cooperation should be implemented in phases, slowly and gradually for, according to him, the masses in India at that time were not trained fully for such a radical programme. Further, he could not endorse Gandhi's programme of indiscriminate withdrawal of children from private or government-aided schools and colleges. He said "that the withdrawal of children of tender age from their schools would effect their sense of discipline and do more harm than good; that the withdrawal of students from the medical, engineering and similar other institutions was not desirable, and that appeal should not be made to the emotions of the students but to their judgement and reason and they should be asked to rely on the voice of their own conscience".[45] Initially, he favoured the withdrawal of students from Arts and Law colleges only.[46] Lajpat Rai was also sceptical about the efficacy of other forms of non-cooperation i.e. the giving up of the titles, boycott of law courts and foreign goods. As regards the giving up of titles, he said that even the Muslims were not unanimous on this aspect of non-cooperation; only two persons from the Punjab had denounced titles and they were Hindus. He urged Gandhi that he should not impose his resolution on the Congress in the present form. Gandhi's non-cooperation was contested by B.C.Pal and C.R.Das. After a long consideration the resolution was finally put to vote. Lajpat Rai "asked all the visitors to leave the Pandal and personally supervised the registering of votes... At the end of the count Gandhi won by 1855 against 883.[47] However, Gandhi's resolution of Non-Cooperation was approved by a majority vote, though Lajpat Rai later expressed doubts with regard to its successful implementation in the present form.

It is clear that Lajpat Rai was not in agreement with Gandhi's programme on certain vital issues. As a matter of fact the Calcutta Congress vaguely endorsed Gandhi's broad policy of non-coperation without working out its details of implementation. After the special session which ended on September 7, 1920, Lajpat Rai reiterated that Gandhi's resolution on complete non-cooperation was not binding. He urged its application only in gradual form, and expressed his disapproval of the clause to withdrawn children and students from the Government sponsored schools.[48]

The non-cooperation resolution passed by the special Congress at Calcutta was a significant event. It was the outcome of the accumulated resentment which the people undoubtedly entertained on account of the wrongs inflicted on them, and which the approaching introduction of constitutional reforms did not help to lessen. It dilated on the perversity of Government in its failure to give redress in respect to the Khilafat and the official misdeeds in the Punjab. It declared that the sole remedy available to the people was the immediate attainment of Swaraj, and that this could only be acquired by progressive non-violent non-cooperation. The adoption of the programme of non-cooperation was a momentous development in India's struggle for freedom. This marks the beginning of the participation of the large mass of India's population - students, lawyers, peasants and workers.

On returning from special Congress, Lajpat Rai stated in an interview with The Tribune that everybody should boycott the councils because this was demanded in the resolution. The Tribune disagreed and said that the resolution was a recommendation and not a mandate. They found justification for this opinion in Lajpat Rai's own view that the other important parts of the resolution were not immediately binding upon any one.[49]

Lajpat Rai published in his paper Bande Mataram an appeal entitled "My message to the People of the Punjab" in which he once more strongly advocated the boycott of the councils without stressing the other points of the Non-Cooperation resolution.[50] A few days later in a letter to The Tribune, he reasserted his view that the points of the resolution relating to the boycott of the councils stood on a different footing than those points referring to the boycott of schools and law courts.[51] For making these distinctions between different kinds of boycotts Lajpat Rai came in for a good deal of criticism and one paper remarked:

> .... the people of the Punjab were ready to carry into effect the complete Congress programme of non-cooperation. But the province has been thrown into suspense by the popular leaders especially Lajpat Rai.[52]

The Vedic Magazine for October wrote:

> .... We must register our emphatic protest against the attempt of Lala Lajpat Rai, who declared in his concluding speech at the Calcutta Congress that everybody should try to make non-cooperation a success to whittle down the Congress resolution.[53]

Meanwhile, the first election under the new reform constitution was about to be held in October and November, 1920. As a matter of fact Lajpat Rai's enthusiasm for the reforms had completely waned. He criticised the British policy of not associating Indians in the framing of the rules under the reforms.[54] He described his own reaction to the reform scheme in one sentence: "It was one of partial elation in 1918, it sank into one of depression in 1919, it changed almost into one of despair in 1920".[55] This attitude was shared by many. One of the items in non-cooperation programme was the boycott of legislative councils. Lajpat Rai was convinced that the existing Indian members in the councils rather strengthened the hands of the Government because their presence gave the councils a semblance of representative bodies, which they were not. They would not do good to the country. Lajpat Rai said:

> I have always been of opinion that the presence of Indian members in the Legislative Councils had done more harm to the country than good. Mr. Gokhale cooperated in passing the Press Act, Pandit Malaviya co-operated in passing the Defence of India Act, the nationalist members cooperated in sanctioning the gift of 100 million pounds towards the expenses of the Great War. These and other similar measures have in my opinion done great harm to the country than the combined services of the indian members of the Legislative Councils for the last twelve years. So far the Indian members have failed to influence the legislatures of the country in the fundamentals of Government Policy. The finance and the military are the two pivots of the Government. Under both heads the Indian members have egregiously failed to influence Government Policy. Their cooperation has been more harmful than their absence from the Councils could have been. The attitude of the Government in the matter of the Rowlatt Act shows what value Government has attached to their cooperation in spite of the prouncement of August, 1917.[56]

The All India Congress Committee had appealed to the Congress members to boycott elections, but decided not to disqualify the candidates from the

Congress membership. In obedience to the call to boycott the councils many prominent Congress leaders did not stand for elections and many withdrew their candidatures.[57] The sitting members of the Councils resigned their seats. From Delhi four candidates withdrew their candidatures. Men like Lajpat Rai from the Punjab and Madan Mohan Malaviya from U.P. did not even file their nomination papers.[58] The appeal for boycott of the councils had a profound effect in the Punjab. Professor Ruchi Ram Sahni, Saifuddin Kitchlew and Bakshi Tek Chand withdrew their candidatures. Mass meetings were held months before the date of elections (5 December, 1920) calling upon the candidates to withdraw their candidature in response to the injunctions of the Congress. Though none of those members, who were opposed to the boycott call, responded to the popular appeals, it is significant that a large number of registered voters desisted from voting in various districts.[59] In Lahore, for instance, of 15,496, registered electors, only 700 turned up for voting. At Amritsar, for the urban seat, only 5 per cent appeared to record their vote and, at one polling station, only one voter thought it advisable to exercise his right to franchise. At Chakwal not a single Hindu voter came to record his vote and only one Sikh and a few Muslims voted. At Sangla three Hindus, one Christian and 657 Muslims went to vote at the polling station. At Hoshiarpur, of the 2,953 voters only 85 appeared at the polling booth.[60] In the Eastern Districts of Haryana, people boycotted the election booths in spite of "the direct and indirect pressure of interested parties".[61] It may be mentioned here that Lajpat Rai's son-in-law Harkishan Dutt, an advocate of Hissar, was not ready to withdraw from the election. One day a procession of 5,000 persons led by Lajpat Rai went to the house of Harkishan Dutt.[62] However, Harkishan Dutt had to bow before Lalaji's wishes. The extent of popular enthusiasm in the province in connection with the Council's boycott can be assessed by the fact that the Commissioner of Lahore is reported to have experienced difficulty in finding sufficient number of candidates to contest elections.[63] The zeal displayed by people, so far removed from the usual centres of public activities, was creditable, indeed. The phenomenon, nevertheless, was limited only to the politically awakened areas and did not apply to the whole of Punjab. Voting in the general constituencies, on the whole was as high as 32 per cent, while in rural areas it was slightly higher. Though the Congress was boycotting the elections, yet at places they encouraged persons from the low castes to contest the elections as independents, and actively supported them. For instance, they supported Uttam Chand, a bhai (priest) and Bansilal, a bhangi (untouchable) for the elections, and they were returned to the Council with a comfortable majority. This step was taken to show that the Congress was a force to be reckoned within the political life of the people.[64] Similarly, in the municipal elections which were not boycotted by it, the Congress swept the polls at certain places. In Lahore, the Congress won 14 of 16 seats and in Sialkot 10 of 15 seats. Lajpat Rai described the Non-Cooperation in the matter of the Council election a "perfect success'. He exhorted the people "to show by persistent declaration that those people who have gone to the Councils, in defiance of the national will, do not represent the nation" and thus carry the agitation to its logical conclusion. As a consequence, the members elected to the Council were branded as traitors to the national cause. It was alleged that candidates, as well as voters, were mal-treated at various places by the supporters of the Non-Cooperation Movements.[65] The franchise was extremely restricted and more than 90 per cent of the voters were illiterate. The priests both the pandits and the pirs - played a vital role in convassing for particular candidates. In the case of illiterate voters, the working of ballot papers had to be done by the presiding officers. Sir John Simon, commenting on these elections marked that "the result was that one man, the presiding officer, elected the member. He could mark the ballot paper any way he liked. In one of the polling booths, the presiding officer used to walk up to the voter and ask the elector for whom he wished to vote. He would then take the ballot paper and mark it while walking to the ballot box without showing it to the elector. Obviously he was working in the interests of a particular candidate".[66] The success of the Council boycott can be assessed from Lajpat Rai's letter, published in London on December 31, 1920:

> There are very few amongst the gentlemen who are standing for the Council election who represent the views of any respectable position of the various communities whom they propose to represent. Their (Govt.) object has failed. The class whose co-operation they wanted has stood aloof and the feeling of the country is with them. Under the circumstances the reformed Council can only be a magnified edition of the old one... As a public worker of more than 35 years' standing, I can honestly say that never did a movement succeed so well and with so little propaganda as the movement to boycott the Councils.[67]

Lajpat Rai, however, was not happy with "about 35 per cent of the Punjab graduates who voted at the Council election... and brought disgrace on the province".[68] This attitude was one of the reason for Lajpat Rai's second thoughts on the prevailing educational system. He had founded the "Tilak School of Politics" towards the end of 1920. This venture was hailed by The Tribune as "the one attempt to impart steadiness to the present political movement". But the principal of the Government College at Lahore slighted Lajpat Rai and prevented his students from attending the School of Politics. Lajpat Rai, therefore, wrote in Bande Mataram on the "Present System of Education":

> .... generally speaking rulers and the ruled cannot be friends... The first of the Education Department is to add strength to the Government and all other educational objectives are subservient to this... They are intended to inculcate loyalty, subservience and obedience. Students have to suppress their views for the sake of bread and degrees. They acquire even meaner habits. Those of backbiting, spying, sycophancy etc... (The order of) the Principal of Government College prohibiting students from attending lectures of Tilak School of Politics is an order of this type.[69]

Thus, Lajpat Rai was prepared to accept non-co-operation in the field of education, too.

Tilak School of Politics" which was formally inaugurated in Lahore was on the pattern of "more or less the Rand School and the Servants of India Society". He named it after B.G.Tilak, a close associate in the national struggle from 1893 to 1920. The Rand School of Sociology was in New York. This institution was run on lines of self-help. Lecturers were paid small honoraria from the fees collected. There was a small endowment fund, the income from which was utilised for house rent and other miscellaneous charges. The School imparted education in social sciences to poor people who could not pay large sums of fees. Lajpat Rai, during his stay in America, had delivered a number of lectures in the Rand School in New York. Similarly, "Tilak School of Politics" whose Director was Lajpat Rai was to train youngmen for political and social service of the nation and combined theoretical study of the social sciences with practical, active social service.[70] The objective was achieved by establishing a society of life members on the pattern of Gokhale's Servants of India Society of Poona. Lajpat named it as the Servants of the People Society. He donated his house and his library to it. A report submitted by Lajpat Rai in 1926 regarding the achievements of the school mentions that they had tried to achieve the objects of the school and nothing new was added to them.[71]

During the Calcutta session a Sub-Committee consisting of Gandhi, Motilal Nehru and Vithalbhai Patel was appointed to prepare draft instructions on the non-cooperation resolution. The Sub-Committee published its report on September 26, 1920 with Gandhi and Nehru on one side and Vithalbhai Patel dissenting. The Sub-Committee said in its report that "the Congress had approved of Mr. Gandhi's full programme of progressive non-violent non-cooperation". But Patel regretted that "he could not see his way to accept the suggestion contained in the report that the Congress has approved of Mr. Gandhi's full programme of non-cooperation".[72] Along with B.C.Pal and Patel, Lajpat Rai also criticised the Sub-Committee's report. He took strong exception to the statement that the Congress had approved of the whole of Gandhi's programme although he said that he agreed with the general policy of non-cooperation.[73]

To consider the report the All India Congress Committee held a meeting on October 2, 1920. Here Motilal very vehemently advocated that the boycott of foreign goods should be taken up immediately. Lajpat Rai did not concur with this thinking; he believed that the programme of the boycott of the foreign goods should be deffered until such times the people are prepared politically and the country has sufficient indigenous industries. The inner differences among the Congress leaders on the scope and extent of non-cooperation were coming to the surface.

Lajpat Rai still did not agree with all the provisions of Gandhi's non-coperation programme. When Gandhi visited Punjab in the middle of October 1920, Lajpat Rai took no part in what took place at Lahore. He shut himself up in his room on the plea of indisposition. His paper Bande Mataram ceased publication temporarily on the pretext of something having gone wrong with the printing machinery. He sent a letter of excuse, sympathy and apology to Gandhi.[74] Lajpat Rai agreed that non-cooperation was the only constitutional weapon left with the people in their struggle for Swaraj. However, he criticised some of the details of Gandhi's plan as purely negative, particularly the proposal of boycott of schools and courts. He acknowledged that the educational system needed a radical overhaul to foster a sense of nationality and patriotism but until adequate alternative facilities were available, he opposed the wholesale withdrawal of students. Further Lajpat Rai wanted structural changes in the Congress organisation. He wanted an efficient net work of district organisations so that Congress programme and ideology could reach the masses.[75] Lajpat Rai clearly realised that the days were over when elitist politics were viable.

On December 26, 1920, Lajpat Rai arrived at Nagpur to attend the thirty-sixth Indian National Congress under the Presidentship of C.Vijaya Raghavachariar which was to ratify Gandhi's non-coperation resolution of the special Calcutta Congress. On his arrival he met Gandhi who removed "all the objection"[76] which

Lajpat Rai had in regard to the non-cooperation resolution passed earlier at the special session. Firstly, the students below the age of sixteen years were excluded from participation in the movement. As regards school and college children over sixteen years of age, Lajpat Rai was informed that "he (Gandhi) does not want them to come out simply because he asks them to come out, but he wanted them to consult their own conscience and see if the voice of conscience, the call of duty to the motherland, asked them to come out and that they should come out only in that case".[77] Secondly, Lajpat Rai's demand to implement the non-cooperation programme in phases and slowly was also accepted. Under the new resolution the non-cooperation programme would not be brought into effect all at once but after due preparations. These preparations were to consist of - "Endeavours to nationalise aided schools; establishment of 'arbitration', i.e.; un-official courts; appointment of a committee to consider schemes for introducing boycott of foreign trade and encourage hand spinning and weaving accompanied by the appointment of a separate committee to organise the immediate boycott of existing contracts with British Firms; institution of an Indian National Service; raising a 'National Fund' to finance the Indian National Service; the organisation of labour with a view to prevent exploitation of Indian Labour and of Indian Resources by foreign agencies".[78] Thirdly, some authors suggest that Lajpat Rai was hard pressed by the Punjabi leaders to favour Gandhi's programme.[79] But the fact was that Gandhi's new resolution, as Lajpat Rai writes, "Practically removes all the possible objections, at least so far as I am concerned, which I had to the old resolution".[80] It appears that Gandhi in presenting his resolution was keen to carry a leader of Lajpat Rai's eminence and stature with him and to offer a completely united front to the British. Shrewed tactician as he was, he accepted Lajpat Rai's conditions. In view of this development the Punjab leader changed his previous stand, and now Lajpat Rai was ready to cooperate with Gandhi in the Nagpur Congress. In this connection M.R.Jayakar writes: "His was the greatest capture Gandhi secured at Nagpur".[81]

In the Nagpur Congress Lajpat Rai seconded Gandhi's programme and extended his full support to the non-co-operation resolution which was accepted with virtual unanimity. Gandhi enunciated the new creed for the Congress: "the object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of Swaraj by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means".[82] The existing Congress aim laid emphasis on the attainment of Swaraj or self rule within the Empire. Now in 1920, the words within the Empire were deleted. Supporting this resolution Lajpat Rai pointed out that in view of the changes and new developments which had taken place in the country the Congress could not exclude from its ranks those patriots who had conscientious objection to signing the existing creed or those who believed in complete independence outside the British Empire. He did not think that the majority of Congressmen or of thinking people in the country were prepared to say that they would at once go in for complete independence or that they would not remain in the British Commonwealth. The change in the creed was, he remarked, "a notice to the British public and the British Government that although we do not at the present aim, directly aim, to get out of this British Empire, or, what we may call the British Commonwealth, we shall not remain at the dictation of anybody or by fear. We shall remain there by our own free choice and free will..."[83] India, Lajpat Rai said, would decide when the time came whether to remain a member of the British Commonwealth or not. "As to the British Empire, I would rather be a slave than willingly consent to be a part of an empire which enslaves so many millions of human beings".[84] Lajpat Rai emphasised that the word Swaraj had been left unqualified deliberately for the purpose of enabling them to remain with the Commonwealth if they chose to do so when a real Commonwealth had been established, or to go out if they so desired. He regretted that at that time there was no British Commonwealth in "real sense".[85]

The Nagpur Session of Congress (December 1920) was a turning point in Lajpat Rai's political life. His forceful speech and strong unflinching support to Gandhi and his resolution made him an outstanding leader. He was appointed a permanent member of the All India Congress Committee. The Nagpur Congress also authorised him to make the non-cooperation movement popular in labour organisations.[86] He was asked to lead the non-cooperation movement in the Punjab.

Another significant development of 1920 was the formation of All India Trade Union Congress in October and Lala Lajpat Rai its first President, Joseph Baptista Vice-President, L.R.Tairsee, Treasurer and Chamanlal, General Secretary. Its headquarter was situated at 7-A, Fort Street, Bombay. The organisation marked the beginning of a properly organised working class movement on an all India basis. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Lajpat Rai had realised the need of such union in India when he was in the United States.[87] Even in 1908, he clearly stated that the cause of the man in the street all over the world was one. The movement in India was bound to have an impact on the movement in England.[88] He believed in the concept of a strong union and unity of the workers. It is obvious from his presidential address to the first session of the A.I.T.U.C. held on October 20, 1920. His slogan "WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE" is significant. He said:

> The workers of Europe and America have now discovered that the cause of worker is one and the same all the world over, and that there can be no salvation for them until the workers of Asia were organised and internationally affiliated... the movement we are inaugurating today is of international significance.[89]

Speaking on the position of labour in India he said, "Labour is still treated as a commodity to be sold and purchased in the open market. In every discussion it is the interests of industry that are held supreme".[90]

His concept on trade unionism as it evolves in this speech had certain characterists. There is a general appeal for mutual bargaining between capital and labour. He said, "the Indian capitalist must meet labour half way and come to an understanding with it on the basis of sharing the profits in the reasonable and just proportion". He asserted that "labour and capital should meet on equal grounds and join hands,.

to develop Indian industries".[91] He did not believe in the abolition of the capitalist class and classless society. He felt that trade union were formed only to safeguard the interests of labour. They were necessary to uplift the Indian labour from the various "drawbacks and prejudices" and to enable it "to negotiate with their employers on equal terms".[92] He wanted the Indian labour to secure the sympathy and friendship of International labour to improve its condition "without necessarily adopting all the items in the plank of the latter".[93] The question of organising labour for political purposes did not arise and there was no one in India who desired to use these bodies for political purposes. The labour organisations were as much interested in the movement for Swaraj as any other class of the population.

The Government of India did not object to the formation of A.I.T.U.C. In September 1921 the Government accepted the nomination of the A.I.T.U.C. to attend the International Labour Organisation which was to be held at Geneva on October 25, 1921.[94]

Before completing his one year term as President, Lajpat Rai resigned from the A.I.T.U.C. One of the reasons was his differences with office bearers over functioning of the organisation. It is obvious from his resignation letter dated September 23, 1921: "I was surprised to read in yestersay's paper an announcement to the effect that you had called a meeting of the Trade Union Congress or its Standing Committee without consulting me and without even caring to inform me officially or unofficially. This is not the first time this has been done. According to the constitution this action of yours is ultra vires but even it was not so, ordinary courtesy due to the President required that you should have consulted me about my convenience etc. I tendered my resignation at the last meeting, but you insisted on my retaining the office till the next session of the Congress. I now find that it is impossible for me to do so..."[95] Secondly, he left the Presidentship as he believed that the doctrine and programme of Non-co-operation was not in accord with the intersts of labour. He felt that labour required full publicity for its grievances, followed by negotiations with Government officials for securing the redress of wrongs, protection from police and army and last but not the least, legislative protection against organized capital. As non-Cooperators had been debarred from seeking help from officials and the legislature, he considered it his duty to resign.[96] His resignation affected the implementation of various statements made by him from the President's platform. N.M.Joshi, a prominent leader of the A.I.T.U.C., wrote to Lajpat Rai about the effect thus: "If you resigned the movement will dwindle down into a mere Bombay affair which is not desirable".[97] However, Lajpat Rai continued to extend his cooperation and advice to the A.I.T.U.C.

The response of the country to Gandhi's call for non-violent non-cooperation was enthusiastic and widespread. India witnessed one of the most powerful movements in modern times. Having accepted the programme of non-cooperation Lajpat Rai plunged into the struggle with complete dedication. He replaced Harkishan Lal as the President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, and directed the movement in the Punjab. He also undertook all India tours to spread the message of non-cooperation. In Punjab he undertook extensive tours and addressed numerous meetings. In January and February 1921, Lajpat Rai visited Rawalpindi, Hoshiarpur, Gujranwala and Lyallpur. To make the movement popular in rural areas a Committee was formed with Lajpat Rai as President.[98] Many District Congress Committees were formed.[99] A large number of Panchayats were set up in the villages. The message of non-cooperation reached many villages. The movement was becoming mass based. According to official reports: "the rural classes are, however, being gradually inclulcated with political ideas and in many parts of the province definite steps have been taken towards the establishment of Panchayats to settle disputes and to dispose of petty cases without resort to the courts".[100]

Lajpat Rai started a campaign to make the boycott of schools and colleges a complete success. Students' meetings were held in the province to awaken and arouse them to activity. On January 24, 1921 most of the students of the D.A.V.College, Lahore, refused to attend their classes. Two days earlier about 400 students of the college had sent an application to the Principal requesting him to invite Lajpat Rai to address the students in the college permises on the subject of non-cooperation. The Managing Committee of the college held its emergency meeting and it decided that this could not be done because Seditious Meetings Act was in force.[101] The students went on strike. Next day about 500 students of D.A.V. College, Lahore, joined by students from other colleges marched all the way from Lahore to Gujranwala to meet the non-cooperation leaders. Here a large number of students of local Khalsa College and schools attended a rally which was adressed by Lajpat Rai. In his address he said:

> They had come all the way from Lahore to Gujranwala because the Punjab Government would not allow him and others to address them in Lahore owing to the Seditious Meetings Act. Their faith in co-operation with the Government was gone for ever. They had tried all methods of co-operation, but had failed and had been compelled at last to adopt the weapon of non-cooperation. Their grievances would not be redressed until they became free in their own land as Englishmen were free in their own... He would boldly and unhesitatingly ask the students to leave their colleges at once and join the Non-cooperation movement wholeheartedly... So long as they would be inside the College, the authorities would do nothing to give them true national and technical education...[102]

Lajpat Rai's forceful appeal to students resulted in a strike in Lahore Colleges - D.A.V. College, Forman Christian College, Dayal Singh College and Senatan Dharam College.[103] The students demanded the disaffiliation of their college. They struck completely on January 27, 1921 and passed a resolution for boycott of the existing institutions.[104] In pursuance of the call given by Lajpat Rai, Sardar Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Bhagwati Charan, Yashpal and many other young students left D.A.V.College and other colleges. At some places attempts were made by the nationalist leaders to convert existing educational institutions into national schools and colleges. Lajpat Rai made efforts to convert D.A.V.College, Lahore into a National College. 'Tilak School of Politics' was transferred to National University, Lahore, as a National College. The Guru Nanak Khalsa College, Gujranwala, disaffiliated itself from the Panjab University. Eight old schools were nationalised and fifteen new national schools were opened. Nearly 25 teachers left the Government institutions. A School department was also established which started an industrial school at Lahore. The Radha Krishan High School at Jagraon in Ludhiana district named after the father of Lajpat Rai and which was managed by Dhanpat Rai, his brother, was got disaffiliated. It was turned into a National School. At Lahore a few Night Schools (Adult Centres) and schools for backward and Harijan children also started functioning. According to a Government report:

> Practically all the masters and the majority of the boys are leaving the schools in consequence, and endeavours are being made by the local authorities to find places for them elsewhere. It is reported that no less than 1,100 students are attending the new national school at Gujrat. On the other hand, an attempt is being made to get the recently nationalised Jat High School at Rohtak returned to its old status.[105]

Accompanied by Gandhi on Fenruary 12, 1921, Lajpat Rai came to Delhi to perform the opening ceremony of the Hakim Ajmal Khan's Tibbia College.[106] C.R. Das and B.C.Pal were following the lead given by Lajpat Rai in Punjab in their own province.[107]

The programme of boycott of courts initially received a modest success in the home province of Lajpat Rai. Notable leaders of the Congress such as Lajpat Rai, Duni Chand of Lahore, Kitchlew, a gosufdar of Sialkot and many others renounced their practice. By April 1921 forty-one lawyers had suspended their practice in Punjab, of whom hardly thirteen depended upon the Congress Provincial Committee for subsistance allowance.[108] The Government, of course, contended that only seventeen had abandoned their practice by February 1921.[109] This was not a mean achievement at the Commencement of the movement. But the initial enthusiasm in this sphere could not be sustained.

The Congress extended its influence rapidly in the Punjab and, by the end of April 1921, some 258 Congress Committees were already in existence. In Rohtak district alone, there were 47 Committees. Gandhi admitted Punjab had "no mean record in non-cooperation".[110]

The rapid progress of non-cooperation movement under the leadership of Lajpat Rai caught the attention of the Government. On receiving a confidential report about the political developments in Punjab, the Home Secretary, S.P.O.'Donell, was very much perturbed. He wrote a long letter to L.French, Chief Secretary to the Government of Punjab, expressing his anxiety. He believed that the speeches delivered by Lajpat Rai in various conferences "exceeded all bounds of decency".[111] He described the speeches of Lajpat Rai "immensely harmful" to the prestige and authority of the Government. "If", he added, "the example of Lajpat Rai was going to be followed by the men whom he was sending in the villages, the result would be nothing short of disastrous."[112] Sir William Vincent, Home Member, also drew attention of the Punjab Government to the desirability of instituting prosecution against Lajpat. It was becoming "increasingly difficult"[113] for the Government to deal with the situation.

In view of Lajpat Rai's activities to popularize and spread non-cooperation, the Punjab Government prohibited him from undertaking his proposed tour of North West Frontier Province. The Government considered his contemplated visit to Peshawar as a "signal for political meetings in Peshawar".[114] The ban on the entry of Punjab leader into North West Frontier Province, however, disappointed the hopes entertained by the local non-cooperationists. On January 10, a meeting of protest against the action of the Local Government was convened at Peshawar where many anti-British speeches were made. They decided to form a Provincial Congress Committee at Lajpat Rai's instance. District Committees had already been established in Peshawar and Dera Ismail Khan.[115]

On March 31, 1921, Lajpat Rai went to Bezwada in Andhra to attend the All India Congress Committee meeting. The members of the A.I.C.C. who attended the meeting were only fifty, but more than a lakh of villagers from a radius of 40 miles had come on foot to have a glimpse of national leaders. In the A.I.C.C. meeting Lajpat Rai reiterated that Gandhi's aim that the nation should collect one crore members on the Congress registers and introduce twenty lakhs of spinning wheels was not yet fulfilled.[116] At this session the strength of the Punjab members in the All India Congress Committee was raised to 33.[117]

On his return in the first week of April 1921, Lajpat Rai went to Dehra Dun to attend a political conference, where he made it clear that the only way to solve the political problem of India was the grant of Swaraj.[118]

In his home province Lajpat Rai's appeal to the Sikh Community to plunge themselves in non-cooperation movement was warmly reciprocated. In a speech in May 1921, Lajpat Rai reminded the Sikhs that "their Guru had taught them to be without fear, nor should they do anything to frighten others. It was against the spirit of the Khalsa and did not become the Sikhs to don the uniform of others."[119] He also contended that non-cooperation was taught by the Vedas and that it should be practised by the Aryas. Consequently, the Central Sikh League, under the presidentship of Sardar Kharak Singh, adopted the non-cooperation resolution by a large majority.[120] The Working Committee of the Central Gurdwara Committee in its meeting on May 19, 1921 adopted resolutions for forming village and district non-cooperation committees. At that time the Sikhs were struggling to obtain control of their holy shrines (Gurdwaras) from the possession of corrupt 'mahants' who had the support of the British Government. The Sikhs adopted non-violent methods and passive resistance for the liberation of Gurdwaras. The British authorities adopted strong and repressive measures to put an end to this agitation. Thousands of Sikhs underwent imprisonment and sufferings. Later Lajpat Rai in his letter to Gandhi praised the heroic sufferings of the Sikh community. "The Sikh community has so far kept its temper admirably well in spite of the provocations given. Most of the arrests have been made in the presence of hundreds and thousands... Our Sikh friends deserve all the praise one can bestow on brave, noble, sufferers in the cause of truth."[121]

Some leaders like Motilal, V.J.Patel and Mohammad Ali were thinking in terms of extending non-cooperation propaganda in foreign countries. But Lajpat Rai was strongly opposed to this attempt. In May 1921, he said: "We have no money to spare for being squandered in foreign countries". "It is out of the question", he added, "to send any competent man from here". On the contrary he asked the Indian patriots abroad that "under the circumstances your place is in India. Come and join us".[122] In a letter to Hardikar who was in America Lajpat Rai wrote: "You and Rao should both return and take your part in the great struggle that is going on. This is the time for every Indian to be at home and be doing".[123] He also asked his son, Amrit Rai, to return from America.

Lajpat Rai kept his foreign friends particularly American and English acquainted with the aim, object and development of the Non-cooperation Movement. He described the movement "a great revolution" which he wanted to keep "bloodless". In a letter to Huebsch, editor of the New Republic, Lajpat Rai wrote that the Indians had started Non-cooperation with the British boycotting their service and association with them in the task of governing. He added, "Ours is a bloodless 'Sein Fein' movement if a thing like that is possible. We are straining every nerve to keep it non-violent whether we shall yet succeed or not is in the laps of the God".[124] In another communication to Dr. J.T.Sunderland, he wrote, "We are at this moment engaged in a life and death struggle with the bureaucracy and have no time and money to spend for any propaganda outside India".[125] Similar letters he wrote to Col. Wedgwood, British M.P., Lippman, Hocket, Prof. Saligman etc. After his arrest his son Amrit Rai continued to inform Rai's friends about the development of the Non-cooperation Movement.

Assessing the political progress in May 1921, he said; "We feel that in the next twelve months we all shall either gain something substantial or be most of us in jail. We do not mind the latter, but we are determined to put forth every iota of our energy and every pie of our money into this struggle, come what may".[126] Lajpat Rai was thus determined to achieve the aims of non-cooperation set in the Nagpur Congress.

In April, 1921, Lord Reading succeeded Lord Chelmsford as the Viceroy of India. At the end of the month, the new Viceroy wrote about his impression of India: "When in England, I was not unduly depressed... by the report of serious conditions in India... I am reluctantly compelled since my investigations here to take a more serious view". Considering the non-cooperation movement as widespread and dangerous, the new Viceroy began to think in terms of launching a massive assault on it in order to crush it.

In the later half of May Lord reading met Gandhi. The meeting had been arranged through the efforts of Madan Mohan Malaviya who favoured a policy of negotiations with the Government. He had not taken any part in the non-cooperation movement. The Viceroy's decision to meet Gandhi was with a view to weaken the nationalist struggle by winning over a section of Congress leadership. These leaders, tired of a long and weary campaign, wanted some negotiated settlement with the Government. Gandhi on his part wanted to discuss, in addition to other political question, the activities of the two Khilafat leaders- Mohammad Ali and Shaukat Ali. Their strong speeches condemning the British rule and inviting the Amir of Afghanistan were not liked by the authorities.

Lajpat Rai reacted sharply to this move. He was not in favour of Gandhi meeting the Viceroy without conditions. He feared that the proposed meeting might dampen the newly aroused enthusiasm and zeal among the masses. He also went to Simla to talk to Gandhi in this connection. After meeting him Lajpat Rai declared that no compromise would be acceptable unless the principles of non-cooperation were conceded. The details of these principles could be worked out later.

He said that even Gandhi would not retain his leadership if he compromised on the vital points of non-cooperation. He also wrote articles in the newspapers against this meeting.[127] Mohammad Ali agreed with him.

Ispite of Lajpat Rai's bitter opposition, the meeting between the Viceroy and Gandhi was held. There were in all six meetings between Gandhi and Reading: their discussion ranged over a wide field - the Punjab disturbances of 1919, the Khilafat movement, the meaning of Swaraj. Later. Mohammad Ali on the advice of Gandhi tendered a written apology for his stirring speeches. But the meeting between Gandhi and Reading did not affect the course on non-cooperation movement.

Between June and August 1921, Lajpat Rai confined his political activities to Punjab. He directed the movement from Lahore. He also visited Amritsar and Rawalpindi. He addressed meetings where he asked the audiences to pick up boycott of foreign clothes to a high pitch. In his view destruction was the best method of dealing with foreign clothes. In August, 1921, at Lahore, he appealed to the people to send their foreign clothes to Lala Amir Chand, General Secretary, City Congress Committee, because the Congress had decided to burn foreign clothes throughout the Punjab on August 28.[128] He also visited Amritsar accompanied by S.E.Stokes, and delivered a speech at Jallianwala Bagh where he appealed to the ladies who were also present to wear-spun cloth as long as Swaraj was not secured. He also said that the only weapon in their hands was the use of Swadeshi and the complete boycott of the foreign clothes.[129]

Through the column of The Tribune, he advised his countrymen to maintain unity during this crucial period. He writes:

> Hindu and Mussalmans! This will be the test of your sincerity and of our love of your country.
>
> No hartals, no excitement, no abuse, no violence, less of bitterness and more of firmness form the essence of this test.[130]

To give impetus to the boycott of foreign cloth in Bihar, the provincial Congress Committee of Bihar, invited Lajpat Rai to deliver lectures. He visited Bhagalpur on September 10, 1921 and appealed to the people to carry on boycott with vigour.[131]

When on September 14, 1921, the Ali brothers were arrested and the Government of Bombay explained in a communique that the charge against them was that of tampering with the loyalty of the Indian soldier, Lajpat Rai reacted sharply. Several meetings were held at Lahore which were attended by twenty to twenty-five thousand persons. Some such protest meetings were presided by Lajpat Rai.[132] On October 4, Lajpat Rai went to Bombay and there he met a number of prominent Indian leaders. Next day he and forty-seven others issued a manifesto condemning Ali brothers's arrest. The manifesto advised every Indian soldier and civilian to "sever" his connection with the Government. It runs:

> In view of the prosecution of the Ali Brothers and others for reasons stated in the Government of Bombay communique, dated the 15th September, 1921, the undermentioned, speaking in our individual capacity, desire to state that it is the inherent right of every one to express his opinion without restraint about the propriety of citizens offering their services to, or remaining in the employ of the Government whether in Civil or the Military Department.
>
> We the undersigned state it as our opinion that it is contrary to national dignity for any Indian to serve as a civilian and more especially as a soldier under a system of Government which has used the soldiery and the police for repressing, national aspirations, as for instance at the time of the Rowlatt Act agitation, and which has used the soldiers for crushing the liberty of the Arabs, the Egyptians, the Turks, and other nations who have done no harm to India.
>
> We are also of opinion that it is the duty of every Indian soldier and civilian to sever his connection with the Government and find some other

means of livelihood .

Gandhi
Lajpat Rai
46 others.[133]

Next day Lajpat Rai attended the meeting of All India Congress Committee which urged the Indians to withdraw from Government services and to boycott foreign clothes, but it postponed the civil disobedience movement. The confidence in the Karachi resolutions of the Khilafat Committee was reaffirmed.[134]

A number of newspapers and magazines of the province openly advocated non-cooperation. The Bande Mataram of Lahore stated that the movement was started on the principle of Vedas.[135] It was the message of Swami Dayanand to go against those states which did not protect the subjects. The magazine which published an article of Lajpat Rai entitled 'Non-Cooperation Movement ordered by the Vedas: Swami Dayananda's message' said that the Vedas taught the creed of Non-Co-operation. Dayanand, according to the writer of the article, had given the support to the people to go against those states who were in habit of realising taxes for their own protection.[136] The Vedic magazine of Lahore described the inner force of the movement in the following words: "The Non-Cooperation Movement is the outward expression of a great moral upheaval and cultural self-assertion. It is the revolt of an eastern people, that has regained its last soul, against the domination of a soulless civilization which scorns the power of the spirit and believes merely in brute force."[137]

When the country was thus engaged in implementing the Nagpur recommendations and non-cooperation was in full swing, the Government of India announced that the Prince of Wales would arrive in Bombay on November 17, 1921. The Government sought to exploit the traditional loyalty of Indian masses to its advantage, and thus arrest the growth of non-cooperation movement. Lord Curzon, speaking in the House of Lords, said that the presence of the Prince of Wales would make a good impression not only on the Princes of India but also on the masses. He described the tour as "fraught with great possibilities".[138] At the same time the Viceroy assured the people of India that neither he nor his Government ever had "the faintest intention of using His Royal Highness visit for political purposes", and that he was going to India as "heir to the throne and the future Emperor of India".[139] The Congress resolved to boycott his visit. Lajpat Rai's opposition to the visit of the Prince was not on account of any personal hostility towards him, but it was motivated by political consideration. Seeing through the clever devide of the British to cripple the movement he made every effort to make the Prince of Wales' boycott a success. He appealed to his countrymen that "When the Prince comes let no man have the slightest decoration anywhere. During his visit let no man stir out of his house and let not the Government employees or the college students be coerced by the departmental heads into joining any official made reception. Let it be cleverly shown to the Prince that the only people who will receive him are the police and the military. Give no occasion for any official high handedness. This is the only way in which you can demonstrate your firm resolve to attain Swaraj by non-violent non-cooperation".[140] He condemned the Lahore Municipality which had passed a resolution of welcome to Prince[141] due to official majority.

The demand in favour of civil disobedience was gathering strength in the country, but the Congress had been postponing it on account of fear that peace and non-violent atmosphere which were indispensable for starting such a movement might not be preserved. However, the demand was becoming almost irrestible. The All India Congress Committee met on the 4th November in Delhi. It was presided by Lajpat Rai and it adopted Gandhi's resolution on individual and mass civil disobedience. The Committee gave reasons for launching the civil disobedience thus: "Whereas there is not much over one month for the fulfilment of the national determination to establish Swaraj before the end of the year, and whereas the nation has demonstrated its capacity for exemplary self-restraint by observing perfect non-violence over the arrest and imprisonment of the Ali Brothers and the other leaders, and whereas it is desirable for the nation to demonstrate its capacity for further suffering and discipline sufficient for the attainment of Swaraj..."[142] The A.I.C.C. also reaffirmed its faith in Karachi resolution passed by the Khilafat Committee. Although Lajpat Rai supported the civil-disobedience and Karachi resolution but he warned the Congressmen that the programme of Civil-disobedience should be enforced slowly and in phases.[143] Undoubtedly, the launching of the civil disobedience was a significant decision. It was aimed to accelerate the national struggle. The signal was given and the Government was challenged.

So far the Government had adopted the policy of non-interference coupled with keen watchfulness towards the non-cooperation movement. It hesitated to resort to strong arm tactics though it was on the alert. But the recent developments compelled the Government to abandon it. The Government was bewildered at the growing strength of the new movement. The Secretary of State felt concerned on account of popular demonstrations against the Prince of Wales. He informed the Viceroy that as head of the Indian Government it was his responsibility to prevent such an open defiance of authority and slow of disrespect to the Prince.[144] The successful boycott of the Prince had unnerved the Government of India and various Provincial Governments too. The Government of India, therefore, issued a policy letter to all Provincial Governments on November 24, 1921. it instructed them to pursue a vigorous policy in dealing with the non-cooperationists.[145] The reason given for the initiation of the new policy was that the recent developments "have satisfied the Government of India that a stage had been reached at which action on more drastic and comprehensive scale than hitherto been attempted is required".[146] According to the Government the new policy had been forced due to the disturbances that occured in different parts of India, the attempts to seduce policemen, formation of volunteer corps, the happenings in Bombay on November 17 at the time of Prince's visit and the preparations to start civil disobedience.[147] So, in the first week of December 1921, the Viceroy girded his loins and launched an offensive against the non-cooperation movement.

The Punjab Government had already surpassed all other governments in suppressing the non-cooperation movement with a strong hand.[148] For instance Sardul Singh Caveeshar and Kitchlew were arrested on May 27 and September 17 repectively. At Sialkot several Congressmen were lodged behind the bars. Six Akali leaders were arrested in the Province for violating the Seditious Meetings Act.[149] Batchittar Singh and Maulavi Ala Ullah Shah were sentenced to three years rigorous imprisonment under Seditious Act.[150] At Ferozepore, Lahore, Ambala and Jullundur the Government arrested some Lambardars and Zamindars for not collecting land revenue.[151] The other Provincial Governments too adopted more or less similar policy.

Then there was suppression of press. Bande Mataram (Lahore), Lajpat Rai's paper, was warned to stop printing the news on non-cooperation. Itifaq (Lahore), Akali (Lahore) and Zamindar (Lahore) had to furnish security to the amount of Rs.2,000 and 1,000 respectively on the charge of expressing sympathy with the non-cooperators. Later, the editor and the publisher of Zamindar were sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment. Zakhmi Punjab (Lahore) which published the incident of the Jallianwala Bagh was prohibited under the Dramatic Performance Act. The Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar destroyed 850 copies of Quissa Makanama Gulza Begum (Lahore) on the charge of obscene publication.[152] The Government report of 1921 admitted that "several Punjab newspapers, which definitely advocated non-cooperation, have been blacklisted at the instance of the Government of India".[153] When the freedom of press was thus gagged in Punjab, Lajpat Rai sent an emissary to Kashmir with the intention of starting a newspaper there. But such permission was not granted by the Government.[154] Unnerved by the difiant mood of the people, the Government declared the Khilafat, the Congress, the National volunteers and the Akali Dal as an unlawful associations under the Criminal Law Amendment Act.[155]

Lajpat Rai knew that his arrest too was imminent. He wrote to his American friends, "None of us are sure of 24 hours freedom. We are in danger of imminent arrest and imprisonment. So you may very shortly hear what to you might look bad news". He also wrote a letter to Gandhi on December 3, 1921 saying that he would reply to him if he was not arrested. The Punjab Government had prohibited all public meetings or conferences under the Seditious Meetings Act. Lajpat Rai wrote thus: "He (Magistrate of Lahore) has also served us with a notice calling ward meetings of ward Congress Committee also public. This means an entire stoppage of work. His orders are illegal". The day Lajpat Rai wrote this letter to Gandhi he had organised a meeting of the Punjab Congress Committee at Lahore and he was determined to defy Government ban. Expressing his regard for Gandhi's movement and making his stand clear Lajpat Rai added: "Under the Circumstances it is impossible for me to keep away from the meeting. It will be sheer cowardice. Please pardon me if my action does not meet with your movement... Rest assured I will not bring disgrace on your movement. Pardon me if I have ever seemed to be critical and disrespectful. In all my actions only one motive has been uppermost in my thought, viz. that of loyalty to my country and my people. If I have erred, I have erred in good faith; even in my criticism of my Moderate friends I have no other motive... I believed in what I said and I believed in it still". He assured Gandhi that, "We are on the right path and only non-violent Non-cooperation can help us in achieving our goal".[156] The meeting of the Punjab Congress Committee opened at 2 P.M. on December 3, 1921. The Tribune gives an account of Lajpat Rai's arrest:

> Lalaji, Santhanam and other members of the Committee were fully prepared. The meeting was a Committee meeting, attendance being confined only to members of whom less than 40 were present. Col. Gregson and armed police surrounded the house and standing at the door, read out the Magistrate's order declaring the meeting unlawful. Thereupon Lala Lajpat Rai asked those who wanted to leave and go away. None stirred from his seat. Even before the commencement of the meeting Lala Lajpat Rai had tried to dissuade certain people from attending the meeting in view of the fact that probably all would be arrested and no responsible men left to carry on the work. Those asked to desist included Lala Hans Raj and Syed Ata Ullah Shah

> (both of Jullundur) and Mr. Abur-Rashid. Lala Hans Raj and Syed Ala Ullah Shah requested to be allowed to attend for the sake of the honour of their town. Immediately after Major Ferrar, District Magistrate, and Colonel Gregson, the Senior Superintendent of Police, entered the room while the Committee was sitting. The District Magistrate said that he declared the meeting an unlawful assembly and ordered it to disperse. Lala Lajpat Rai, who was in the Chair, thereupon replied that he considered the meeting lawful and as president refused to disperse it. Major Ferrar addressing Pandit Rambhaj Dutt asked who the Speaker was. He was informed by Panditji that it was Lala Lajpat Rai who spoke. Lala Lajpat Rai himself said, "I am Lajpat Rai". Thereupon Major Ferrar said, "I arrest you". Lalaji gladly surrendered himself.[157]

Thus, the authorities arrested important leaders of the province like Lajpat Rai, Gopi Chand Bhargava, K. Santhanam and Malik Lal Khan on December 3, 1921.

The action of the Punjab Provincial Committee received Gandhi's full approval. He was all admiration for Lalaji's wisdom, courage and sense of duty. Gandhi wrote: "Lajpat Rai could not have acted otherwise than he did. I was anxious for him, if it was naturally possible, not to seek arrest till after the Congress (which was to be held at Ahmedabad towards the end of December 1921). But in the circumstances that faced him, he could not avoid attending the meeting without hurting the cause... In every action of Lalaji, I see nothing but thoughtfulness and calm courage."[158] In his absence Agha Mohamad Safdar Sahib was made acting President of the Provincial Congress Committee. Lajpat Rai refused to appeal in the court because he had no confidence in a court decision.[159] Meanwhile Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru and C.R.Das, President-elect of the Congress, were also arreested in December 1921. Later in March 1922, Rajagopalachariar and Gandhi were arrested.

Lajpat Rai's sudden and "illegal" arrest caused strong feeling in Punjab as also in the country. His friends in British Parliament raised the question of his arrest. It became difficult for Montagu, the Secretary of State, to give any satisfactory reply.[160] On his instructions, the Indian Government went through the legal aspect of Lajpat Rai's arrest. It was soon declared by the legal officer that Punjab Provincial Congress Committee meeting "was not a public meeting".[161] Consequently, the Punjab Government was forced to release Lajpat Rai. Before his release, however, it was planned to re-arrest him.[162] On January 30, 1922 he was released, but was re-arrested on the charge that as "President of the Provincial Congress Committee he had signed a manifesto in the Lahore papers inviting persons to enroll themselves in the National Volunteer Association, which had been proclaimed an unlawful association".[163] He was sentenced to two years' imprisonment and a fine of Rs.500/- About this development Amrit Rai, Lajpat Rai's son, wrote to Prof. Seligman in America thus: "Father and his three colleagues were released but immediately father was driven out of the jail's main gate. He was shown another warrant and rearrested under Section 17(6) Criminal Law Amendment Act read with 109/117 sections of the Indian Penal Code. This drama was all enacted at the dead of the night of the 31st January 1922. He was made to get up at about 11.30 P.M. His first companion was released at about that time. The second an hour after and third at about 1 P.M. After all his time came. His luggage was removed from his cell and taken to the car which was supposed to carry him to me. As soon as he ordered the driver to open the car doors he was shown another warrant for re-arrest by the police officer. He was immediately taken in the jail again and confined to the cell where he had made his house since last two months".[164]

Lajpat Rai's imprisonment gave a new impetus to Non-Cooperation Movement in the province. Numerous protest meetings were held condemning his arrest. The official reports from the various parts of the province indicated that the resignations of the government servants gained momentum. Thirteen officials and Lambardars resigned in the Punjab during the first half of January 1922.[165] Dr. Satyapal, S.E.Stokes, Gokul Chand Narang, Lala Feroze Chand and many others were arrested. They were active associates of Lajpat

Rai; they were in the forefront of non-cooperation movement.

As described earlier the British Government had unleashed reign of repression in order to crush the non-cooperation movement in the country. The Congress faced this challenge boldly and courageously. The leaders adopted the programme of organising individual and mass civil disobedience as passed at Ahmedabad session of the Congress in December 1921.[166] When the mediation efforts of Malaviya and others failed to bear fruit Gandhi, the undisputed leader of the movement, decided to launch mass civil disobedience in Bardoli taluka of Gujarat. The impending struggle created a great stir in the country and the public gaze was focussed on Bardoli. When all was set for a heroic struggle Gandhi decided to suspend the movement on hearing of the violence of the mob at Chauri Chaura in Gorakhpur district.[167] The Congress Working Committee met at Bardoli on February 11-12, 1922 under the shadow of this national disaster, and on the initiative of Gandhi it decided to withdraw the non-cooperation movement.

The sudden withdrawal of non-cooperation movement was not approved by many leaders like Lajpat Rai, Motilala Nehru, Asaf Ali, Subhash Chandra Bose and C.R.Das. Lajpat Rai exploded in the jail in the presence of his visitors, and said: "After all Gandhi was.... baniya. A Baniya could never undertake the liberation of a country."[168] The decision, in the words of Lajpat Rai, "burst upon a confiding, expectant and hopeful country like a bombshell. The shock was too sudden, catalysmatic and unexpected. It bewildered and to a certain extent surprised and angered the people".[169] The sudden retreat looked like a betrayal. None could understand why Gandhi chose to withdraw the entire movement for the mistake of a mob in an isolated village on the northern borders of U.P. The leaders in prison were highly indignant and they sent their angry protests from behind the bars.[170]

Lajpat Rai's anger, shock and bitter feeling against Gandhi at the unexpected withdrawal of the movement is evident from the letter he wrote to the members of the Congress Working Committee from Lahore Jail.[171] He wrote:

> With the Bardoli resolution our movement has reached a stage which makes it necessary to have a close searching of the hearts and a clear idea of where and how we stand. Within the last eighteen months from September 1920 upto date of the Bardoli resolutions we have made several mistakes, both in principles and in practice... These mistakes ought to be openly acknowledged, atoned for and the responsibility for them placed on proper shoulders so that we may be in a position to chalk out our future course of conduct, with surer grasp of the realities of the situation than we have hitherto done.

In this letter, Lajpat Rai also criticised the policy followed by Gandhi. His faith in Gandhi's political leadership was shaken because he deemed non-violence as an impossibility from the practical point of view. Human nature could not be changed all of a sudden and therefore the occurrence of violence at some place or other could not have been averted by the best efforts of the leaders and the masses. However, he still continued to believe in non-violent non-cooperation. He wrote:

> Fundamentally, I still believe that non-violent non-cooperation is the only road that will lead us to our goal. I have all my life believed in Non-cooperation with a foreign government. It was left to Mahatma Gandhi to prefix 'Non-violent' to it and to place it before the country in the form of an organised programme. This certainly improved the situation and the cooperation of a section of the great Muslim community made it workable.

He paid glowing tributes to Gandhi for his achievements in politics and credited to his account the honesty of purpose, fearlessness, discipline, self-confidence, suffering for the cause of truth and better understanding between the Hindus and the Mohammedans. These had never been achieved before in the conduct of the freedom movement, so much so that Lajpat Rai estimated Gandhi not only as "the greatest Indian living" but "as one of the greatest of men of all ages, all times and all countries". Even so, he could not exonerate Gandhi for his part in the collapse of the programme of civil disobedience. He further wrote:

> Yet that is exactly the reason why we have to swallow the bitter pill of ignominous defeat today, because, say what we may, we have been defeated and that too very badly. Our defeat is in proportion to the greatness of our leader. Several times and in several matters, in the course of the last eighteen months, we surrendered our better judgements to his decisions.[172]

Lajpat Rai, in his letter, pointed out two faulty assumptions which Gandhi had made for the non-cooperation programme. One was the reliance on the Muslim's support and the other was the fixing up a period of twelve months for achieving Swaraj. He believed that the Muslim support was not adequate in the latter phase of the movement. The enthusiasm of Gandhi and Ali brothers did not always enjoy the backing of Mohammedans residing in the Frontier Provinces and the Punjab. The Muslims showed keenness for the Khilafat movement, but they were generally lukewarm toward the non-violent non-cooperation.

Another miscalculation was fixing up a period of twelve months for the completion of non-cooperation programme. This was a reference to Gandhi's slogan of "Swaraj in one year" at the Ahmedabad session of the Indian National Congrses in December, 1921. The programme was bound to be defeated not only because of the inadequate response from the countrymen but also because of Gandhi's setting up a time limit for the achievement of such a lofty ideal. Besides, the chances of violence breaking out sporadically could not be eliminated from such a mass movement. To him, the Chauri Chaura tragedy was deplorable but occurrences of such violence under provocation and passion were inevitable.

> To change the hearts of the mobs in such a way as to make it impossible for them to indulge in these brutalities without changing the hearts of the governments that rule over them is an impossibility. When humanity reaches that point

it will cease to be human, it will become a body of superman, of Devatas and it will no longer need the guidance of men of the type of Mahatama Gandhi.

Lajpat Rai was of opinion that "a political leader is like a general and no general can afford to be chicken hearted". "A general" he added "can denounce, degrade, even shoot such of his soldiers and subordinates as do not follow his directions and obey his orders, but he has no right to throw down arms and admit his defeat involving the capture of his army by the enemy, simply because a few out of millions have disregarded his wishes". He further added, "Leaders of political campaign for freedom can not afford to wear their hearts on their sleeves". Lajpat Rai expressed happiness over the role played by the Punjab in the non-cooperation movement despite the greatest and the most humiliating provocations. He wrote: "All classes in the Punjab have proved worthy of the faith that was put in them. The most warlike of them, the Sikhs, have given the lead and for that day deserve our best thanks".[173]

It is a bold, vigorous and fearless analysis of the situation as it appeared to Lajpat Rai then. He roundly attacked Gandhi for his misjudgement and "cowardice".

Much has been said against the abrupt suspension of non-cooperation movement. The Communists attribute the suspension of the movement to Gandhi's leadership.[174] They believe that when the movement began to show signs of becoming a really mass movement the 'bouregoise' leadership felt frightened and they decided to halt it. The secret service of the Government suggested that the movement was suspended because Bardoli was not yet ready for launching Civil Disobedience Movement.[175] It is very difficult to agree with any of these explanations for the suspension of the non-cooperation movement. Dr. Prafull Chandra Ghosh has quite correctly analysed the situation at it then stood. According to him, "the sudden outburst of violence at Chauri Chaura put him (Gandhi) off the gear. He considered himself unfit under the circumstances to control the spirit of indiscipline and the forces of violence prevalent in the Congress rank and was let to believe that if mass civil disobedience was started in Bardoli there might be anarchy. Believing as he did he had no other alternative but to suspend the Bardoli campaign".[176]

Lajpat Rai's letter to Gandhi from jail on the suspension of civil disobedience was largely due to his ignorance of political developments in the country. In the same letter Lajpat Rai had also written that it was for the Mahatma (Gandhi) to decide whether his letter should be shown to others or not.[177] Gandhi read out his letter before the members of the Congress Working Committee. He observed that Lajpat Rai was in jail, so he was not in possession of all the facts. If he was probably he would have expressed a different opinion.[178] On his release from jail in August 1923, Lajpat Rai's views changed when he examined the circumstances which had compelled Gandhi to suspend the civil disobedience movement. He admitted the wissom of Gandhi's action thus: "According to my ideas of non-violence, he should not have abandoned the original Bardoli programme on account of Chauri Chaura, but having read his views on the question I am sure that was the only thing to do for him according to his principles'.[179] R.C.Roy Chaudhury wrongly assessed that "Lajpat Rai never recovered from the shock of this move which he thought had let them down badly. He lost much of his confidence in Gandhiji's leadership and never made a secret of it."[180] The fact is that Lajpat Rai had great regard for Gandhi as a national leader. He writes in this connection: "I see no reason to despair or even to be very much disappointed... A great movement for civil desibedience to be successfully piloted through requires the leadership of a great magnetic personality like that of Mahatma Gandhi ji... If Mahatma Gandhi has done nothing else for us, he has at least been an example of combining independence of spirit and courage with sweetness, forbearance, charity and goodwill for all."[181] On December 22, 1923, Lajpat Rai openly admitted, "I am in full agreement with him (Gandhi) on the point that having abandoned the original programme there was nothing else to do but to take up the constructive programme planned by him at Bardoli".[182] Thus, after his release he changed his previous stand on Bardoli resolution. Lajpat realised wisdom of Gandhi's action.

As mentioned earlier Lajpat Rai was sentenced to two years' imprisonment in January 1922. His friends made many efforts for his release. But the Government was not in favour of his early release. C.R.Das was not allowed to see Lajpat Rai in jail. But in April 14, 1922, Malaviya was allowed to meet him in the Lahore Jail. According to the official reports his (Malaviya's) principal aim was to secure the release of Lajpat Rai, and so he was allowed to have only two interviews with him.[183] Malaviya was bitter at the prohibition of the meeting which he attempted to hold again.[184] He also could not pass on his bundle of newspapers and magazines and brought these back to be sent through the usual channels. C.F. Andrews had not much difficulty in getting the permission. Dr. N.R.Dharamavir, who still continued to practise at Padiham (in England) was on a short visit to India after a very long absence, and of course he was keen on meeting Rai - in fact, he had two interviews, at Lahore and again at Dharamshala. St. Nihal Singh who came in Lahore in 1921 also met Lajpat Rai when his trial had already resulted in an illegal conviction. He had come as one of the press entourage accompanying the Prince of Wales.

Other friends of Lajpat Rai had also put up in the same prison - K.Santanam, Gopi Chand Bhargava, S.E.Stoke, Aga Mohammad Safdar whom Rai had appointed to succeed him as the head of the Punjab Congress soon joined the company. There were other notable Mussalman friends too - Abdul Ghaffar Khan from the North-West Frontier, Habib-ur-Rahman, a well known Maulvi from Ludhiana, then an outstanding figure in the Punjab Khilafat Committee.

Questions regarding Lajpat Rai were raised in the British Parliament. Saklatwala asked, by private notice, the Under-Secretary of State for India, "the nature" of offence proved against, and the date and terms of sentence passed, on Lajpat Rai, the President of the First Trade Union Congress of India. He was also eager to be enlightened on the point if the Lala was reported to have been suffering from tuberculosis and whether, bearing in mind this disease, his age and his past great services to India, the Government would grant remission of the remaining period of his sentences. The answer given by Winterton explained the fact that Lajpat Rai was sentenced on the 9th of March, 1922 to one year's simple imprisonment under the Seditious Meetings Act, the sentences to run consecutively. The Under Secretary, however, expressed his ignorance in the matter of his health beyond what had appeared in the press. Regarding the demand of an equiry concerning his health, he only promised to discuss it with the Secretary of State for India, observing at the same time that he saw no logical reason why similar inquiries be made into the health of hundreds of others and that such a state of affairs would impose an intolerable burden upon public funds.[185]

Meanwhile, Lajpat Rai was feeling uneasy on account of his week health and death of his father in 1923. His private letter reveals that he was suffering from tuberclosis of the lungs.[186] Wedgwood, in a letter to the Secretary of State on August 14, 1923, expressed his concern at "the state of health of Lajpat Rai".[187] He also asked the Government to hold an enquiry about his health. This was turned down by the Government on the ground that an enquiry "would involve a burden on the public fund".[188] On the pressure of Parliament Members, the Secretary of State was impressing upon the viceroy for his early release.[189] The Government were thus more or less forced to release Lajpat Rai much against their desire.

Notes and References

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2. S.L.Karandikar, Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak: The Hercules and Prometheus of Modern India, (Poona n.d.), p. 626.
3. Letter, February 21, 1920, Tilak to Khaparde,

Khaparde Papers.

4. Letter, April 26, 1920, Lajpat Rai to Col. Wedgwood M.P.; Wedgwood Papers.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Letter, August 16, 1919, Motilal Nehru to the Superintendent of Lahore Jail, Jawaharlal Nehru Papers.

9. In a communication to Hardikar, Secretary of the Home Rule League in America, Lajpat Rai expressed surprise to witness psychological changes among the masses and younger generation thus: "the changes in the spirit of the people is simply wonderful. You notice it every minute and on all sides. The most remarkable change is in the psychology of the man in the street. He seems to have suddenly avenged into political consciousness over night. The younger generation is full of ambition and fire. The task of the leaders will for a time consist in restraining them and using their enthusiasm for constructive purposes". Letter, March 10, 1920, Lajpat Rai to Hardikar, Hardikar Papers.

10. The Tribune, February 20, 1920, Lajpat Rai's interview with the Reporter of the paper.

11. Letter, March 25, 1920, Lajpat Rai to Hardikar, Hardikar Papers.

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13. P.D.Saggi (ed.), Life and Work of Lal, Bal and Pal, (Delhi, 1962), p. 44.

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15. Bande Mataram, May 18, 1920.

16. Ibid., May 21, 1920.

17. Letter, March 10, 1920, Tilak to Khaparde, Khaparde Papers.

18. Letter, June 9, 1920, Motilal to Jawaharlal, Jawaharlal Nehru Papers.

19. A.I.C.C. Report, File No. 18/1920 (Supplementary).

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. The Tribune (Lahore), July 3, 1920.

23. Bande Mataram (Lahore), May 29, 1920.

24. The Tribune, July 3, 1920.

25. Harkishan Lal had announced that Non-cooperation programme was bound to fail. See CWG, Vol. XIX, p. 4.

26. Azim Husain, Fazil-i-Husain: A Political Biography, (Bombay, 1946), p. 123.

27. Interview with Dr. Gokul Chand Narang, Transcript, N.M.M.L.

28. The Tribune, June 25, 1920.

29. Azim Husain, ibid, p. 123, writes that the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee disapproved the boycott of new legislature.

30. At the Amritsar Congress out of 346 delegates, 254 voted in favour of the resolution on Non-Co-operation, and 92 voted against it.

31. Telegram, September 3, 1920, Viceroy to Secretary of State, Chelmsford Papers. See also letter, August 22, 1920, Lajpat Rai to Moderate Leaders, N.M.M.L.

32. Letter, August 30, Surendra Nath Bannerjee to Lajpat Rai vide The Tribune (Lahore), September 1, 1920.

33. Bande Mataram, July 3, 1920.

34. Nanda, B.R., Mahatma Gandhi, (London, 1965), p. 129.

35. Telegram, July 20, 1920, Viceroy to Secretary of State, Chelmsford Papers.

36. A.I.C.C., File No. 18/1920 (Supplementary).

37. Lajpat Rai's Presidential Address, Calcutta, (Lahore Tandon & Co.).

38. Ibid.

39. Writings and Speeches, Vol. II, p. 40.

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49. The Tribune, September 9, 1920.

50. Bande Mataram, September 19, 1920.

51. The Tribune, September 24, 1920.

52. Virat (ed. Dyal), October 4, 1920.

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57. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political), Deposit No. 35, February, 1921.

58. The Tribune, June 24, 1920.

59. Ruchi Ram Sahni, History of Our Own Times, Vol. IV (unpublished), p.8, State Archives, Patiala.

60. The Tribune, 4,5,8,12 March, 1920.

61. Ibid., 12 March, 1921.

62. Interview with Harkishan Dutt, March 2, 1976.

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64. P.L.C., 2 January 1924, Vol. VI, p. 3, the success of boycott was recognised by the Governor of the Punjab on 2 January, 1924 when he said, "the practice of international abstention which was then considered proper by so many electors is no longer approved and we have had some 250,000 votes polled as against 130,3000 on the last occasion". See also Panjab Administration Report, 1920-21, p. 10. The local bodies elections were not boycotted by the Congress. In these elections 37 per cent

of the electors voted showing nearly 5 per cent increase as compared to general election in the province, Ibid.

65. P.L.C., Vol. V., 1923, pp. 1-4 & 146.

66. Quoted from Feroz Khan Noon, From Memory, (Lahore 1966), p.94.

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69. Ibid., December 5, 1920.

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73. Ibid.

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76. Lala Lajpat Rai: Writings and Speeches, Vol. II, p. 68.

77. Ibid.

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79. Statesman, November 18, 1923, obituary for Lajpat Rai, quoted in Denial Argov's Moderate and Extremist in the India Nationalist Movement (Delhi, 1967), p.167. However, I have found no contemporary evidence of Punjab delegates forcing Lajpat Rai's hand. M.R. Jayakar later commented that Rai was prompted "by the fruitlessness of continued

opposition" and so he fell in line with Gandhi's programme. M.R.Jayakar, The Story of My Life, 1876-1922, Vol. I, (Bombay, 1958), pp. 72-74.

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81. M.R.Jayakar, The Story of My Life, 1876-1922, Vol. I, (Bombay, 1958), p. 414.

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89. A.I.T.U.C. Address of Lala Lajpat Rai vide V.C. Joshi, Writings and Speeches, Vol. II (new Delhi, 1965), p. 58.

90. Ibid., p. 61.

91. Ibid., pp. 60-61.

92. Ibid., pp. 58-61. Also see Legislative Assembly Debates, VII, Pt.I, 1926 (Delhi, 1926), pp. 910-17. Speech of Lajpat Rai on the Indian Trade Union Bill which provided for the registration of trade unions in India, February 8, 1926.

93. A.I.T.U.C. Address of Lala Lajpat Rai, op. cit., p. 63.

94. Letter, Chaman Lal, General Secretary of A.I.T.U.C.

to Lajpat Rai, September 21, 1921, N.M.Joshi Papers.

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103. Telegram, February 21, 1921, Viceroy to Secretary of State Chelmsford Papers.

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108. Collected Works, 1921, Vol. XX, p. 81.

109. Punjab Legislative Council Debates, Vol.I (January 8 to April 16, 1921), Lahore Superintendent Printing, Punjab, 1921, p. 81.

110. Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol.XX, pp. 181-82.

111. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political), Deposit, File No. 5, March, 1921 pp. 4-11.

112. Ibid.

113. Ibid.

114. Telegram, February 17, 1921, Viceroy to Secretary of State, Chelmsford Papers.

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117. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political), Deposit No. 55, June, 1921, Secret.

118. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political), Deposit, No.51, June, 1921.

119. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political-B), No 287, June 1921.

120. Ruchi Ram Sahni, History of Our Own Times, Vol. IV (Unpublished), p. 3.

121. Letter, December 3, 1921, Lajpat Rai to Gandhi, L.No. 7686, Gandhi Papers.

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133. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political) File No. 303, Nos. 1-48, 1921.

134. Ibid.

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136. The Bande Mataram (Lahore), January 1921.

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138. Debates on Indian Affairs, House of Lords Session, 1921, 11 and 12, (London, 1922), p. 212.

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140. The Tribune (Lahore), November 29, 1921.

141. Telegram, August 25, 1921, Viceroy to Secretary of State, Reading Papers.

142. Resolution No.11, Indian National Congress 1920-23, (place & date not mentioned), 72.

143. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political) File No. 303, Nos. 1-48, 1921.

144. Telegram, December 9, 1921, Secretary of State to Viceroy, Reading Papers.

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147. Ibid.

148. According to official figures the arrested non-co-operators in India in 1921 were 9,176, in 1922, 15,015. The figures in Punjab of arrested persons from November to December 1920 were 200; in 1921, 273; between January to March 1922, 1,737; April to June 1922, 1,833; and July 1922, 137. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political), F.No.28/III, 1922 (Confidential).

149. The Indian Annual Register 1922, Vol.I, p.45.

150. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political), Deposit, No.45, June, 1921.

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153. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political), Deposit, No.35, February, 1921.

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No.55, June, 1921.

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156. Letter, December 3, 1921, Lajpat Rai to Gandhi, L.No.7686, Gandhi Papers.

157. The Indian Annual Register, 1922 (Calcutta), p. 320. See also Letter, February 8, 1922, Amrit Rai to Prof. Seligman, E.R.A.Seligman Papers.

158. Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, 1921, Vol.xxii, p. 25.

159. "Conviction of Lajpat Rai", "Home Department, G.O.I. (Political), No. 536 & KW, 1922.

160. Home Department, G.O.I. (political), No.536 & K.W. 1922.

161. Ibid.

162. Ibid.

163. Ibid.

164. Letter, February 8, 1922, Amrit Rai to Prof. Seligman, E.R.A. Seligman Papers.

165. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political), No.536 & K.W., 1922.

166. Home Department, G.O.I. (Political), No.18, January 1922.

167. Chauri Chaura was a village and police station, 15 miles to the East of Gorakhpur (U.P.). On February 4, 1922, two thousand volunteers and peasants were fired at by the police causing some casualities. In retaliation, people raided the police station killing all (20) but two policemen. The police station was burnt down. 228 men were tried of which 19 were given death sentences and 115 were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment.

See Ceceil Kaye, Communion in India, ed. Subhodh Roy, (Calcutta, 1971), p. 345.

168. Chabil Das, transcript, OHD, NMMI, Jagat Narain also confirmed what Chabil Das said about Lajpat Rai's reaction after Chauri-Chaura. After two days, however, Lajpat Rai cooled down and never said anything against Gandhi.

169. The Tribune (Lahore), November 18, 1923.

170. Lajpat Rai: Writings and Speeches, Vol. II, pp. 88-96.

171. Lajpat Rai to Members of the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress, undated, S.No. 7917, Gandhi Papers.

172. Ibid.

173. Ibid.

174. Bose, Subhash Chandra, The Indian Struggle, 1920-34 (Calcutta, 1948), pp. 73-74.

175. Report of a Secret Agent called "Justice" February 12, 1922, vide Home Department, G.O.I. (Political), Nos. 82-11, 1922.

176. Ghosh, P.C., Mahatma Gandhi As I Saw Him, (Delhi 1968), p. 133.

177. Lajpat Rai to Members of the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress, Ibid.

178. Ghosh, P.C., op. cit., p. 114.

179. The Tribune (Lahore), December 22, 1923.

180. Chaudhury Roy, P.C., Gandhi and His Contemporaries, (New Delhi, 1972), p. 141.

181. The Tribune (Lahore), August 29, 1923.

182. Ibid., December 22, 1923.

183. H.D.Sraikts to S.I.O.'Donell, Secretary to the Government of India, vide Home Department, G.O.I. (Political), File No. 86, 1922, (Confidential).

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186. Letter, August 29, 1923, Lajpat Rai to Huebsch, B.W.Huebsch Papers.

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Chapter 6

LAST PHASE: THE SWARAJ PARTY AND THE SIMON COMMISSION

When Lajpat Rai was released in August 1923, the Congress had split into two factions. One of them known as Swaraj Party and led by C.R.Das, Motilal Nehru, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Seshadri Srinivasa Iyengar and others wanted to enter the Legislative Councils and Assembly. The other party headed by Rajagopalachariar, Rajendra Prasad, M.A. Ansari and others thought that council entry was incompatible with non-cooperation and its result would be an end of the atmosphere of civil resistance. C.R.Das had announced the formation of the Swaraj Party immmediately after Gaya Congress on January 1, 1923. Those who took Gandhi's dictum about 'Swaraj within a year' literally found themselves in deep disappointment, and the Swarajists appointed C.R.Das as their leader and Motilal Nehru, B.N.Sasmal, Vithalbhia J.Patel and Chaudhary Khaliquzzaman as the Secretaries. The manifesto of the new organisation declared that "while the goal of the party is the attainment of Swaraj, the immediate objective of the party is the speedy attainment of full Dominion Status".[1] The programme of the party was to frame a constitution adopting such machinery and system as suitable to the conditions of the country and the genius of the people.[2] Among those who signed this manifesto were important members of A.I.C.C. which formed the nucleus of the Swaraj Party.

In the Punjab, too, the congress leadership was divided. While, Dr. Saif-ud-din Kitchlew supported the first group, some others like Santhanam, Abdul

Quadir, Ruchi Ram Sahni and Gokul Chand Narang opted to side with the second.[3] Towards the end of 1922 Lajpat Rai had extended his support to the Swarajist group by advocating a change in the Congress programme. In a letter to C.R.Das, written from Lahore Jail, on the eve of the Gaya Congress, he advised rethinking about the Congress programme and changes in view of the prevailing political situation. He wrote:

> I am disposed to think (tentatively) that it will be a mistake to go into the Councils either for cooperation and or for obstruction. The terms responsive co-operation or responsive non-cooperation, are mere phrases which mean nothing. The best we can do is to follow the 'Sinn Fein' plan and attempt to set up a rival Government. A rival assembly and rival councils elected on Government franchise will be a great moral victory... Politics is a changing game and I do not believe in any inflexible, cut and dried scheme good for all times and under all circumstances.[4]

After his release Lajpat Rai commended the Swarajist programme, although he insisted on unity in the Congress ranks. He supported the Swaraj Party for he planned to fight for national cause from within the councils. In the councils his object was to "create such a deadlock as would force hands of the Government to make terms with us and release Mahatma Gandhi and also to prevent the new council for being used for repressive purposes".[5] But at the same time Lajpat Rai was keen to maintain unity in the Congress ranks. He realised, "this is only possible by allowing pro-council friends liberty of conscience and action".[6] He did not want to repeat a Surat like split in the history of the Congress.

Meanwhile a special session of the Indian National Congress was held at Delhi in September 1923 under the presidentship of Abul Kalam Azad. Its main aim was to consider the demand of Swaraj Party. Lajpat Rai could not attend the special session owing to ill health. The session was causing great anxiety as it was generally feared that it would cut the Congress in two, sharp and clean. C.R.Das and Motilal Nehru were taking all care to mass their full strength at

Delhi and to marshall it with the utmost skill. In a telegram to Lajpat Rai on September 6, 1923, Motilal said:

> Doctors permitting your presence at Delhi when preliminary conference held 10th September will be invaluable. Will arrange your stay at Qutab. Only select parties seeing you there. Wire. Nehru"[7]

But he had to keep away from the preliminary meeting as well as from the session itself. He, however issued a manifesto appealing for unity. He said that a mass civil disobedience on a large scale had, for the time being, to be indefinetely postponed and that in the absence of Gandhi their task consisted of "securing his release, discovering another personality who may, in course of time, take his place, in the meantime keeping the flag flying and devising some other methods to compel the Government to negotiate".[8] He also advocated that the council boycott should be suspended and that the elections should be contested. The candidates should follow the programme which would be laid down for them at the special session of the Congress at Delhi.[9] His advice was heeded, and consequently the Delhi Congress resolved to concede freedom to those who were in favour of parliamentary activity and suspended all propaganda against entering the Councils. This decision was reiterated at the regular annual session held three months later at Cocanda (December 1923) with even Rajagopalachariar supporting it. The decision gave the Swaraj Party the necessary latitude that it wanted, anything further by way of a direct Congress imprimatur might well wait for some time. The Delhi Congress also set up a committee of two to prepare a draft for a national pect. Originally entrusted to Dr. Ansari at a previous meeting of the A.I.C.C. the task was now to be shared by him with Lajpat Rai.

The formation of the Swaraj party, and the decision of the Congress in September 1923, to remove the ban from entry in the councils, ushered in a new era in the history of legislatures. The Punjab Swaraj Party declared in a bulletin that of the 37 A.I.C.C. members from the Punjab and N.W.F.P., 23 had joined the Swaraj Party, and more were likely to join.[10] C.R.Das toured the Punjab with other Congress leaders like Rajagopalachariar, Rajendra Prasad, Mrs. Naidu and Dev Das Gandhi. The Punjab leaders of the Swaraj Party like Duni Chand of Ambala, Raizada Hans Raj, Ata Ullah and Ruchi Ram Sahni, toured the province canvassing and looking for suitable candidates. In a public meeting R.R.Sahni said that it was necessary for the representatives of the people to go to the council to deprive the bureaucracy of authoritarianism. In the Punjab, thus, most Congressmen not only supported the Swarajist programme but earnestly started preparations for the election. Lajpat Rai, however so far refrained himself from openly supporting the Swarajists. On August 26, 1923, he called upon the Congressmen of both parties to unite and threatened to leave politics if they indulged in a indefinite postponement of the civil disobedience movement. After the removal of the ban on the entry of Congressmen in the councils, the Swaraj Party in the Punjab received the blessings of Lajpat Rai. Duni Chand was elected President, and Krishan Gopal Dutt and Dhan Raj Bhasin as Secretary and Financial Secretary respectively.

The election campaign for the Swarajists in Punjab towards the end of 1923 was virtually run by Lajpat Rai. He toured the province extensively, made forceful speeches in favour of Swaraj Party and wrote innumerable articles. By his powerful exertions he greatly contributed to the success of the party. He could not contest himself on account of the restriction imposed upon him as he had undergone two years' imprisonment. On October 25, in an appeal to his countrymen, he said: "Only Swarajists should be sent to the new councils. Every Indian who signs the Swaraj Party's creed is a Swarajist. Those who cannot sign that creed should unhesitatingly make room for Swarajists...[11]

The Swarajist leaders, about 125 from the Punjab and other parts of India, in a joint manifesto issued an appeal calling upon the people to maintain communal harmony. Prominent among the signatories were Lajpat Rai, Mufti Kifaitullah, M.M. Malaviya, Ruchi Ram Sahni, C.R.Das, A.K.Azad, Maulana Mohammad Ali and Motilal Nehru.[12] The whole atmosphere in the Punjab had been vitiated by communalism and sectionalism. It was, therefore, difficult for the Punjab Swaraj Party to select candidates acceptable to all communities. Commenting on the list of nominations Lajpat Rai said:

> A Nationalist Mohammedan should in any case be preferred to a thorough pro-government man and similarly a nationalist Hindu. I am afraid at the present moment communal feeling is so strong in the province that Hindus can not ignore Hindu feelings, nor Mohammedans, Mohammedan feeling, and that is a natural result of communal representation.[13]

In pursuance of their programme, the Punjab Swaraj Party announced that they had "decided to capture the Council and to tear as under the delusive clock of the reforms". It pledged to get the Mahatma freed and "expel the traitors and the worshippers of the government from the political field". While appealing to the voters to return the Swaraj Party candidates, the statement said: "Your self respect, powers of discrimination, patriotism and nationalism are now being put to test and we fully hope you will come out with flying colours in this examination."[14] It was also pointed out that everything was being done in consultation with Lajpat Rai to remove the misgivings of some of his followers. Rai now declared his total support to the Swarajists and campaigned actively for the Swaraj Party nominees.

The elections were considered more satisfactory than the previous elections - the number of votes polled had risen to 250,000 as against 130,000 polled on the last occasion in the Punjab. There were three organised parties which contested the elections, the Swaraj, the Hindu Nationalist and the Rural (Later known as Unionist) parties. The second Reformed Council was, thus, "a marked political advance" on the first. Others fought either as individuals or on a S.G.P.C. ticket. Of the seventy one elected members, Swaraj party candidates won seven seats (all Hindus)[15] whereas the S.G.P.C., its ally, won two (Sikhs) seats. The Swaraj Party and their allies could thus, muster only nine seats. But they hoped that the nationalist Muslims would also support them (Swaraj party).[16] The Swarajists had a striking success in the elections for the Legislative Assembly, securing 45 elected seats in a house of 145. The official report of the Punjab admitted, "its leaders undoubtedly exercised great influence over the people and they were personally responsible for the success attained by the Swarajists".[17]

Commenting on the Swarajist performance in the elections, The Tribune, in an editorial, attributed the Swarajist failure to capture more seats to three causes - (1) The weakness of the non-Muslim population in the matter of representations, (2) The lack of sympathy for the Swarajists on the part of the Muslim electorate and (3) the failure of the Swaraj Party (owing to its late appearence in the field) to nominate a sufficient number of candidates, and educate a sufficient number of constituencies in the electioneering process.[18] Taking into consideration the weakness of the Congress in the Punjab, in general, and the rise of communalism in particular, the limited success of the Swarajists in the elections was not insignificant. According to Sri Ram Sharma, a leading Congress member of the time, the Swaraj Party owned its victory to the vigorous support of Lajpat Rai. The pro-British and reactionary Nationalist Party was routed at the polls.

Two reasons forced Lajpat Rai to visit Europe in April 1924. Firstly, he was not keeping good health. It was felt that a brief stay in Europe and consultation with European specialists might prove worthwhile. Secondly, after Labour's coming into office it had occured to many that as the Congress leader with the best experience in work abroad and the best contacts in England (more particularly amongst Radicals and Labourities), Lajpat Rai might usefully be sent there for a short while as a sort of informal delegate - that he could combine the interests of his health with those of political work if he took a holiday abroad. Suggestions to that effect came from Beatrice Webb.[19] She rather thought some in the Cabinet would like to be told what might be done for India, and suggested that it would be a good thing if Lajpat Rai could manage to be with them for a while, though of course she warned him against expecting big results. She said, "Labour is in office, but not in power".[20] However, he took a *Lloyd Triestino* boat from Bombay on April 9, 1924.

During his stay in Europe he consulted the specialists, particularly in the Swiss Nursing Homes. He met his old friends Syyamji Krishna Verma in Switzerland, S.R.Rana and Madam Cama in Paris, Virendranath Chattopadhayaya and Agnes Smedley in Berlin. The whole of May 1924 he was in England, living at Hampstead. He met his Indian friends as well as the Wedgwoods, and the Webbs and other English friends mostly in the Labour and radical circles. He took an opportunity to see Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald, an old friend. He renewed his contact with Lord Oliver who on May 7 asked him to lunch at the Savoy. During this visit he for the first time formally joined a socialist party.[21] His outlook had no doubt been for a long time influenced by socialism and socialist contacts like those at the Rand School in New York, and his social programme for India, drawn up even whilst he was still in America, leaned distinctly the socialist way, but he did not think the moment was ripe for starting a definitely socialist movement or party in India. Another outcome of Lalaji's visit was his joining the Independent Labour Party[22] and getting Oliver interested in Indian prisons.

Lajpat Rai was in regular correspondence with Gandhi, Malaviya, Motilal Nehru, etc. during this visit abroad. Early during his stay in England the *Times* one morning (May 5) carried a cabled message from its Calcutta correspondent saying that Mr. Gandhi proposed to lay down a programme of co-operation in the Councils and have it adopted by the next Congress, and that he would try to obtain majorities in the Assembly and the Councils. The news was startling and Rai could not readily believe it. Lajpat Rai in his cable dated May 8 asked Mahatma Gandhi about it by cable[23] and the reply came: "Never dreamt such thing. See no change of heart warranting co-operation, Gandhi".[24] This reply he sent immediately to the *Times*, to Ramsay MacDonald and to Lord Oliver. On the eve of his departure from England Lajpat Rai, in a letter dated June 2, 1924, wrote to Huebsch about his visit thus: "My main purpose in coming to Europe was treatment and rest but I did contemplate seeing labour leaders also. I have seen so many labour leaders including Cabinet Ministers and have had heart to heart talk with them". In these meets he raised the question of an advanced self-government in India. In reply the labour leaders said "they have not the power to give". Although Lajpat Rai was not very hopeful about the outcome of his talk but he "began to feel that all Governments are similar. There is only a difference of shade".[25] There seemed nothing much to do in England. So he decided to leave for six weeks' stay in Switzerland and a subsequent wandering about on the continent. He had his visa extended to Germany, Denmark, Austria, Hungary and Turkey. Before he left England, Indian students and Indian doctors presented him with a purse, which later on he passed on to the Gulabdevi Tuberculosis Hospital funds.

Lajpat Rai was an admirer of Young Turks. So he decided to return India via Constantinople. His son Amrit Rai who had been studying in Germany had joined Rai. About his visit to Constantinople Lala Feroz Chand, a close associate of Lajpat Rai, writes: "He was welcomed in Constantinople and was proud to have friends among those who counted there. One of the Indian Muhajarins, Shaukat Osmani, had recorded in his memories of the hijarat days how when he met Enver Pasha somewhere in Central Asia, one of the first questions the renowned soldier asked him was about Lajpat Rai and his activities, paying the Indian patriot high tribute as a leader".[26] From Turkey, father and son proceeded to Egypt, and after a few days' stay there set sail from Alexandria by the same Italian boat which Rai had taken from Bombay for the outward voyage, landing in Bombay on September 20, 1924.

The annual session of the Congress was held at Belgaum in December 1924 under the presidentship of Mahatma Gandhi. The Congress was on the verge of a split. Sitaramyya writes, "The revolt against Gandhism was almost complete, and the Congress stood at the parting of ways".[27] As President of the Belgaum session, Gandhi reached an agreement with the Swarajists, they were to carry on the work in the Legislatures on behalf of the Congress organisation, making their own rules and administering their own funds, while the Congress would restrict its work to the constructive programme.

Lajpat Rai could not attend this Congress Session on account of ill health and he was taking rest at Karachi. There he stayed for a while as the guest of Jaswant Rai who since The Punjabee days had settled down there to a prosperous business career. However, the national leaders had consulted him on certain important matters before the Belgaum Congress. It is obvious from the correspondence. On December 8, 1924 Rai received at Karachi a telegram from Motilal Nehru which read: "Abul Kalam Azad proposes important consultation Delhi 11th. Please join health permitting. Nehru".[28] This was followed up by another telegram from the Pandit: "Can reach Lahore on 12th wiring Das".[29] They met at Lahore for an exchange of views, this being necessitated by the slender likelihood of Lajpat Rai attending the Congress Session.

But a few days later he again left for Sind to give the bracing climate of Karachi a fuller chance. In Hyderabad he met Jairamdas Daulatram and Choithram who were going to attend the Congress. In Karachi he exchanged views with many Sindhi leaders - T.L. Vaswani, Jamshed Mehta, Abdullah Haroon, Hatim Alavi etc. On his onward journey he met N.C.Kelkar and his friends of Kesari group. Back in Bombay, he met many old friends, among them Vithalbhai Patel and R.B.Lotvala. He stayed at Seth Hindumal Dani's house on Walkeshwar Road.[30] From Bombay he went to Calcutta to see C.R.Das and expressed his dissatisfaction against Bengal Pact. The homeward journey too was punctuated by halts - at Banaras, Allahabad and Delhi. The Delhi sojourn provided occasion for a discussion with Hakim Ajmal Khan and Dr. M.A.Ansari regarding the deterioration in Hindu-Muslim relations.[31] Feroz Chand had accompanied Lajpat Rai on this important tour, Lahore to Sind and back to Lahore.

In 1925, the political atmosphere was changing on account of differences in the Swaraj Party. In such a situation, Lajpat Rai wished to propose M.R.Jayakar's name for the Presidentship of the forthcoming Congress session at Kanpur in 1925. In this connection he started his endeavours in the month of July 1925. He wrote to Jayakar, "I am proposing your name for the Presidentship of the next Congress".[32] Jayakar had no objection but he suggested that he would "have to work hard and secure Gandhi's assistance and support". He felt "he (Gandhi) is practically the king maker and one has no chance unless he backs it".[33] The Punjabi leader admitted "Gandhi after all is the master still". However, he conveyed his frank opinion to Gandhi through C.F.Andrews. In reply he was told that, he admitted their force and legality but committed himself to nothing". He gathered impression that "Gandhi seems to be determined to have Mrs. Sarojni Naidu" as the next Congress President. He was not happy with this and said, "In my judgement it is better to re-elect Gandhi than to have Gandhi through Mrs. Naidu".[34] In fact, Gandhi had already decided to make Sarojini Naidu as President, for, he felt, "she has served India well, and is still doing so". He was convinced that "if others who have so far occupied that position, were fit for it, she too is fit".[35] Lajpat Rai and his Maharastrian friends decided not to pursue the matter further. Ultimately Mrs. Naidu was elected Congress President.

As mentioned earlier Lajpat Rai could not contest the election in 1923 on account of the ban imposed by the Government. But his absence from the Central Legislative Assembly was actually felt by the Swarajists. They, therefore, worked for his election. After the expiry of ban on his election in 1925 Lala Hansraj resigned from the Assembly, thus making it possible for Lajpat Rai to enter the Central Legislative Assembly. His election to the Assembly on December 8, 1925 proved a great source of strength to the opposition. After taking the oath of membership, he formally joined the Swaraj Party on January 25, 1926. But that did not mean a complete surrender of his individuality and principles. On the eve of his joining the party he had made his position clear on four important issues through a letter to Motilal Nehru written on January

20, 1926:

> (A) I believe in the Council work. I am opposed to boycott of Councils and Assembly; I am not in favour of the Swarajists accepting offices as the gift of the Government. (B) I do not believe in wholesale obstruction and have never believed in it. (C) I wish to retain my freedom of action on communal questions. I understand that communal questions shall not be decided by a party vote. (D) In disputes between Labour and Capital, I am a Labour man.[36]

Towards the end of 1925, the Swaraj Party was rocked by an inner dissension, and the cleavage deepened with the emergence of the "Responsivist" group which included M.R.Jayakar, N.C.Kelkar and Balkrishna Shivaram Moonje. This new group stood for co-operation, or opposition to the bureaucracy in response to or in accordance with the changing circumstances. They realised the hollowness of obstructionist and "walkout" policy. The division within the Swaraj Party was due to the acceptance of official posts and cooperation with the Government, Shreepad Balwant Tambe, a prominent leader of the Swarajists in the Central Province, had accepted the membership of the Executive Council of the province and V.J.Patel was elected as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. These incidents led to a bitter controversy. Motilal Nehru, the leader of the Party, demanded from Tambe an explanation and called a meeting of the All Indian Swaraj party to consider the matter at Nagpur. Before the meeting took place, Jayakar, the leader of the Swaraj Party in the Legislative Council of Bombay, defended Tambe and issued a statement asserting that tambe's action was analogous to the acceptance of the salaried post of the President of the Legislative Assembly by V.J.Patel. He suggested a re-examination of the policy of refusing offices and asked whether time had not come when places of influence, power and responsibility ought to be unhesitatingly taken. The resolution of the Executive Committee of the party at Nagpur on November 2, 1925 condemning Tambe's action as violation of the constitution and a gross breach of discipline had the unfortunate effect of uniting most of the Maharashtrian members of the

Legislature against the Executive Committee of the Swaraj Party. Jayakar and Kelkar resigned from the Executive Committee and formed a new party of responsive cooperationists with the intention of giving a fillip to the council entry programme "by occupying every place of power, initiative and responsibility and giving no quarter to the bureaucracy".[37]

The Maharashtra group through private correspondence was persuading Lajpat Rai to "support us more actively" to make the programme of the Swarajists more honest and less full of camouflage. M.R.Jayakar described Motilal Nehru's group "orthodox Swarajists" and accused him for using newspapers like the Bombay Chronicle, Nava Kal and other vernacular papers against Poona group. He wrote to Lajpat Rai, "Mr. Kelkar imagines, and not without reason, that Pandit Motilalji is actuated by an anti-Maharashtra bias and desires to kill the spirit which has always actuated Maharashtra from ancient times". "There is no doubt", he added "that Panditji has behaved most dictatorially in this matter and has hurled defiance and anathemas all round, so much indeed that ultimately it became difficult even for men like Mr. Kelkar and myself, with all our loyality and good feeling, to keep quiet any more".[38] The Mahratta group described their task difficult because of the popularity and personality of Motilal and without the designing which the money in his hands enabled him to perpetuate. Expressing his confidence in Lajpat Rai he wrote on November 15, 1925 thus: "I know your line of fair play and also your ancient sympathy with Maharashtra, and I am sure you will sympathise with our efforts to retain for Maharashtra a proper place in the conclaves of the country. We all feel that it is death struggle for us, but we mean to persevere in the effort in order that the country should be once more brought back to sensible politics away from tall talk and wicked camouflage... There is great need to bring the country back once more to strong and save nationalistic politics in the spirit of resistance which you and Tilak created in old days".[39] The Maharashtra group had another grievence against Motilal Nehru. They felt that he took "all liberties with the programme even to the extent of joining in social festivities with government officers, but would not extend liberties to others even to suggest a variation". They described it a "queer state of things" and they were determined to "cry a halt".[40]

On his part, Lajpat Rai was opposed to "uniform, continuous and consistent obstruction" and repudiated the Swaraj Party's policy of indiscriminate walkouts from the legislatures. He had sympathy with those who were in favour of responsive cooperation though he did not entirely agree with their views.

There were ties of personal esteem - a legacy from Tilak's days, and Kelkar and Jayakar and the Maharashtra group in general more or less shared his outlook regarding the need for a Hindu organisation. Lajpat Rai was keen to avert a split in the Swaraj Party and made every attempt to bring about reconciliation between the two groups. To heal the breach in the Swaraj Party, Lajpat Rai wrote articles in his organ The Peple. He also made efforts along with Mrs. Naidu to bring about a compromise between the two warring wings of the party. They succeeded in arranging a conference in Bombay between the leading responsive cooperators and the orthodox Swarajists on November 4, 1925. Amongst those present at the Conference were Motilal Nehru, Jayakar, Kelkar, Srinivasa Iyengar, A.Rangaswami Iyenger, Tulsi Chandra Goswami, Jamnadas Mehta, Abhyankar and Moonje. The advice given by Lajpat Rai and Mrs. Naidu, who were also present, was heeded. It was decided that the vocal hostilities should close on either side till the Congress session to be held at Kanpur decided the question one way or the other.[41] At the Kanpur session the Congress resolved to accept the original Swarajist programme, but Lajpat Rai decided to remain with the Swaraj Party, in preference to joining the Resposivist group. His stand antagonised the Poona group. Feroz Chand writes:

> A break had thus come - not with Motilal Nehru, but with Kelkar and Jayakar - and this was no small wrench to Lalaji. Perhaps if his own Punjab lieutenants had not been so keenly insistent he would have acted differently. But Lajjavati, Santanam and Achint Ram had in beseeching him

done their utmost and it was not so easy for Lalaji to ignore their earnest entreaties. Perhaps if these lieutenants had fully taken into consideration their leader's commitments with Jayakar and the Poona group, or realised how ill at ease he would feel after a break with them, they might not have been so insistent.[42]

The Mahratta group was sore. And not long after Lajpat Rai had to complain about the sour comment he was getting from them. In this connection he wrote:

> My Maharatta friends appear tobe very angry with me. Ever since the Kanpur Congress, the Mahratta has been at me in some way or the other. In every issue it has some fling at me. I have never replied and do not intend to do so now. My respect for and attachment to Messrs Jayakar and Kelkar has not in any way been affected by the differences in our policy. The Poona Maharashtrians and myself have been life long friends and it will pain me immensely if ever I have to say anything unkind about them. I must resist that temptation to the best of my capacity. I am confident that we shall work on the same platform and with the same mutual goodwill as we have always done in the past. The present differences are only temporary. I do not think sarcasm and ridicule ought to be employed against friends and that is my only reply to the last fling in the Mahrattta.[43]

Thus, the Kanpur Session of the Indian National Congress made him melancholy and he was not happy at this development.

In March 1926, the A.I.C.C. met at Delhi, and substantially altered the walk-out provisions of the Kanpur resolution. The course now decided upon was that the walk-out should not be put off till the rejection of the Finance Bill. Lajpat Rai objected that the A.I.C.C. had no jurisdiction to amend the resolution passed by the plenary session. The objection was accepted but the sponsors of the new move thereupon shifted their ground and said that they 'interpreted' the Kanpur resolution as laying down the latest date and that an earlier walk-out was not contrary to its text. Rai took exception to the 'interpretation', but was outvoted. At Kanpur he had insisted that the walk-out should be resorted to only after the throwing out of the Finance Bill. That provision was now abrogated. In fact the A.I.C.C. resolution cut short the party's attendance in the Assembly only by a few days. It was already near the fag end. In his paper he commented that if he had his way he would have put off the walk-out till the August session - but "the die has, however, been cast".[44]

Meanwhile, an International Labour Conference was about to take place in Geneva in the last week of May 1926. Lajpat Rai decided to attend this conference as a representative of the Indian workers. He was the first President of the All India Trade Union Conference. He left Bombay by a P & O Steamer, S.S. Ranpura, one of the largest and most up-to-date liners, and landed at Marseilles early in the morning on May 7, 1926. He left immediately for Paris.

In Paris he stayed with S.R.Rana, the pearl merchant, and many old friends. Among the interesting new contacts was that with Jean Longuet, "one of the two topmost leaders of the French Socialist Party", and a grandson of Karl Marx, through his daughter who had married a Frenchman. Lajpat Rai had an interesting interview with this "very good-looking, strongly built, tall Frenchman with a fine forehead, extremely polite, extremely well informed and extremely balanced in his views" for he did not swear by the communist creed and was expecting that before long the peasants would come into power and overthrow the communists in Russia.

He was in London for barely a week - to see friends, to collect impressions about the British general strike that took place in the beginning of May 1926, to have a preliminary talk with his solicitor-friend, H.S.L.Polak, regarding the deposed Maharaja of Nabha,[45] leaving over any tangible steps till the relevant documents arrived, and to see the Light of Asia, the first Indian enterprise in film-making in England, with Devika Rani as a star and produced by Niranjan Pal in whom he was interested because of his father Bipan Chandra Pal.

The eighth session of the International Labour Conference opened on May 26, 1926. On the very first day of the session Lajpat Rai submitted two resolution, one demanding an inquiry into the conditions of native and coloured labour in Africa amd America - which was agreed upon after some amendments, Rai accepting the amended form as a first instalment. His second resolution called the attention of the Governing Body to a previous resolution sanctioning the appointment of a correspondent in India which had remained in cold storage for about four years.[46] He was told that the year's budget arrangements having been settled, nothing could be done immediately, but was given an assurance that his reminder would prove effective the following years.

Lajpat Rai in his speech on June 2 sincerely espoused the cause of the "Labour in the East".[47] He regretted that about one thousand millions of the human race residing in Asia and Africa were represented in the Conference by fewer than half a dozen people.[48] In view of the numerical strength of workers in Asia and Africa, he called upon the delegates of European and American countries to take greater interest in their conditions. Otherwise, the industrialists of Europe and Africa might take advantage of the semi-developed labour class of Asia and Africa and transfer their industrial and economic activities to these regions to the detriment of the labour and the workers at home.[49] He was of the opinion that in the countries which had not yet attained self-government, the problem was more complex. He asked the International Labour Conference to exert its moral pressure on those states where the conditions of labour were the worst. He said:

> I would desire the International Labour Office... to note that the interests of organised labour in Europe and America require that the condition of labour in the eastern countries and in countries where there is a foreign government should at least be brought before the bar of public opinion... The conditions of labour in certain parts of the British Empire, for instance, in fiji, in Kenya

and in South Africa, require publicity.[50]

About India, Lajpat Rai pointed out that the slow process of labour legislation and labour reforms was due mainly to the sloth of the foreign government. Criticising the government and the native rulers of India for the prolongation of forced labour he pleaded for the immediate removal of this inhuman system.[51]

In this conference he also advocated the moral point of view. He felt that an International atmosphere should be created which would arouse the moral conscience of the world to bring about what moral pressure it could on those countries where the conditions of labour were improper. It was important to place the interests of women and mothers on a higher level than the intersets of industries. His solution to the Indian problem, amongst other ways included the giving of moral sanctions by the government.[52]

Lajpat Rai was rather struck by the continental atmosphere of the conference. The British no doubt dominated the League, but the Labour Conference at any rate was permitted to develop in a different way, and the British were far from ruling the roast. This to Rai was an addded reason why India should pay more attention to the ILO and why she must send a full and truly Indian complement to its conferences. To the conference that Lajpat Rai attended, India had sent just four delegates, Sir A.C. Chatterjee and Sir Louis Kershaw to represent the Government, Sir Arthur Froome to represent the employers and Lalaji to represent the workers. Just the minimum number of delegates and just one Secretary for the Government representatives; not a single substitute and not a single adviser for employers or for workers. And of this delegation Sir Atul and Lajpat Rai were only two Indians. This conference had been represented by more than 30 countries. Lajpat Rai and Sir Arthur were the only delegates who had no advisers attached to them. In contrast to the two Indians he noticed the delegation from Japan were fifteen strong delegates and substitute-delegates and advisers. He also noticed the Japanese were making excellent use of all international opportunities that came their way.

In the ILO Lajpat Rai got an opportunity to develop international contacts. Of the informal events on this occasion, Lalaji's dinner on June 3 was a notable one, workers' delegates from almost all the important European and Eastern countries having attended it. These included Jouhaux, the French Socialist leader, Duffy and Suzuki from Japan, the British Trade Unionists, Pugh and Ben Tillit, and Margaret Bandfield (who later became lady Chatterjee), besides the delegates from Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Gemany, Bulgaria, Australia and South Africa. He also met Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. Taraknathdas and Sarangdhar Das who watched the proceedings of the Conference. Shyamji Krishna Verma was attending the Conference as a pressman. Romain Rolland lived nearby, and Lajpat Rai paid several visits to his villa. during his three weeks stay in Geneva he also attended the World Parliaments Union.

After attending the International Labour Organisation Lajpat Rai went to England for two months. Here he attended the World Migration Congress held in London as a representative of Indian working class. He spoke on the colour question with his usual vigour, and perhaps some of the British and colonial 'labourities' did not much relish the home truths and home-thrusts from India's representative. It provided him with excellent contacts among the labour and socialist movement the world over.

An internationally signed manifesto was issued from London during Lajpat Rai's stay there demanding the abolition of conscription. Its signatories included Romain Rolland and Hery Barbubse, and from India Tagore, Lajpat Rai and Gandhi.

Lala Lajpat Rai was influenced by the Fabian Socialists Beatrice and Sidney Webb in the development of his socialistic ideas. They were the pioneers of socialism in the U.K. During this visit Lajpat Rai was with his old friends, the Webbs, for two whole days. In his talk he told the Webbs that while he wanted complete autonomy in all international matters, "the nearer India (got) to home rule the greater (would) become the antagonism between Mohammadan and Hindu and the struggle for power.[53] About his stay he wrote that though he had had the privilege of their (Webbs') friendship over a number of years, "he never knew them so well as he does now after having lived with them for two whole days under the same roof and after having read Mrs. Webb's My Apprenticeship from cover to cover".[54] It cannot be exactly ascertained when he first came into contact with the Webbs but there is a striking similarity of thought between the Webbs and Lajpat Rai.

While reviewing the book Rai specially emphasized on those extracts of the book which he found instructive and which interestingly he preached also. He pointed out that the discovery which Mrs. Webb made for herself and for others was,

> that unless the capitalist system was to destroy the body and soul of great masses of the wage-earners, it was imperative that free competition whould be controlled not exceptionally but universally so as to ensure to everyone a prescribed national minimum of civilized life.[55]

While commenting on this extract Lajpat Rai specially mentioned that the word used by the Webbs is "controlled" and not "abolished". The goal aimed at is a "national minimum of civilized life". He, like the Webbs, always felt that free competition should not be abolished but controlled. He did not desire to establish a classless society but wanted the reduction of gulf between the rich and the poor.[56]

Like Webb he believed that every development of social structure, including capitalism was not a natural growth but was the result of human intervention, the outcome of human activities. He understood that although the conclusions and creed of the Webbs were revolutionary, their method was neither revolutionary nor spectacular. Yet that method was "sure and safe". He strongly recommended a careful study of their book to all his countrymen who had an ambition of being politically useful to their country.[57] He brought a number of copies of Mrs. Webb's book to India which he presented to his friends, one to Lajjavati, another to his own daughter-in-law Saraswati (Mrs. Amrit Rai) commending it in glowing terms.

Lajpat Rai had to overstay in London, more than once putting off his departure because of his Nabha brief. One of the Maharaja's men had accompanied Lalaji, but he did not have the necessary record with him and this, it was understood, would follow soon after by post. In London Lajpat Rai had a consultation with his solicitor friend, H.S.L.Polak; but before being able to take any effective steps the solicitor wanted certain documents which Lalaji and the Maharaja's agent accompanying him did not have. Letters and cables seemed to have no result in expediting things. In the end Lalaji cabled to the Maharaja that he could not wait indefinitely in London and returned. The Maharaja felt much annoyed; but afterwards when he saw that in the circumstances Lalaji was justified, he expressed regret for his early annoyance and made up with him. Next year when he again happened to be going to Europe, he requested him to get legal advice for him on certain minor things, which Lajpat Rai gladly agreed to. Thus, Lajpat Rai landed in Bombay on August 13, 1926.

On August 24, 1926, Lajpat Rai resigned from the Swaraj Party when the Legislative Assembly was in session at Simla, and formed alongwith M.M.Malaviya the Congress Nationalist Party. The reasons for such a step are not far to seek. Firstly, he did not like the walkout policy of the Swarajist leaders and believed, "the walkout has injured the interests of the country in general and of the Hindus in Particular".[58] Some Muslim members of the legislature did not adopt the policy of walkout like the Swarajists. They cooperated with the Government, and gave full support to it on all important issues. As a result of this support they were getting many advantages and concessions from the Government in terms of jobs, share in the services, etc. Lajpat Rai reacted sharply to this and considered it harmful to other communities. He was of the opinion that "one community is determined to use the Reforms and legislatures to their best advantage. If the other communities keep out an attitude of obstruction, they go to wall".[59] Secondly, he wanted strong opposition party in the legislatures.

He observed that the opposition to the Government largely rested on the elected Hindus and some Muslims. "If they walk out," Lajpat Rai writes, "this opposition is considerably weakened".[60] Thirdly, he also believed that the Swarajists had failed in their original programme to wreck the Reforms from within.[61] Lajpat Rai was essentially an independent person in politics. Before his election to the Assembly he had often criticised the Swaraj Party, and he disapproved of its policy of continuous obstruction. His views on communal problem too were not in harmony with those of Swarajist leaders. In spite of these differences he had joined the Swaraj Party in January 1926 when he was elected to the Assembly. At the kanpur Session he felt inclined towards the responsivists, but when hard pressed by his friends he decided to support the Swarajists. He bitterly criticised the continuous obstructionism of the party. On March 6 and 7, 1926, the A.I.C.C. met at Delhi. Altering the Kanpur decision it passed the resolution calling on Swarajists to withdraw from the Assembly, prior to their rejection of the Finance Bill. To Lajpat Rai it was nothing short of amending the Kanpur resolution. He raised a point of order that the A.I.C.C. was not empowered to alter or to amend the resolution passed in the open session. His objection was accepted but the supporters to the amendment contended that the Kanpur resolution only fixed the last day for the walk-out and that the walk-out before that time was not against the resolution. Lajpat Rai had to bow before the majority decision. In March 1926 even before the vote on the budget was taken the Swaraj Party staged a walk-out in the Central Legislative Assembly. This evoked a strong protest from Lajpat Rai. On his return from the International Labour Conference in August 1926 he found the Swarajists still following the "walkout" policy. This distressed Lajpat Rai. He wanted that the Swaraj Party must attend the Monsoon Session of the Assembly in Simla. In this session two important official measures were coming up, one embodied the Government's decisions on the recommendations of the Royal Commission on currency and Finance and therefore of the utmost importance to India's industry and commerce, and the other proposed an amendment of the Criminal Procedure Code that would affect liberties. It was possible the Government were in a hurry about these measures just because they thought the Swarajist walkout gave them an excellent opportunity to rush to the statute-book whatever best suited their own wishes. But the party turned down his proposal.[62] Unable to bear the strain of Party discipline, Lajpat Rai decided to quit. in his letter of resignation he wrote to Motilal Nehru:

> Swaraj Party as at present constituted is distinctly harmful to the Hindus not so much in the matter of their differences with the Muslims as it is so, intrinsically in matters between the Government and the Hindus. The walkout has positively been more harmful to the Hindus than to any other class or community. You say, you came to the Assembly to wreck the Reforms and everything that it implied although you have not acted in that spirit, and have attended the Assembly for one purpose at least even after the "walk out". I, however, did not come to the Assembly with that object or on that principle, nor did I stand for election on the Swaraj Party ticket.[63]

In his opinion boycott undermined the Hindu voting strength in the Council, amounting to a breach of faith on the part of members with their constituents. The uneasy combination of communalism and nationalism in the pronouncements of the Swaraj Party had a deep impact on the politics of the province during the years that followed.[64]

The resignation letter led to acrimonious debate between Lajpat Rai and Motilal Nehru. They exchanged strong letters justifying their own position. Sarojini Naidu, anxious to preserve the unity, got busy using all her womanly tact, and with infinite patience, tried to explain the position of each to the other, and carried whatever messages, formulas, queries and replies were entrusted to her, even at odd hours, up and down between Firgrove (where Rai stayed) and Shantikuteers (where M.M.Malaviya was) and Hotel cecil (where Motilal had his G.H.Q.). All these efforts failed to produce the healing effect. The Swarajists lifted the ban for a day to attend the Assembly for the currency bill debate, with the result that the

Government not feeling sure of the majority put off the proposed currency legislation to the first session of the new Assembly. After that the party executive decided to ignore the rest of the session. This did not suit Lajpat Rai. On August 24, the party had an important meeting. Overnight Sarojini Naidu and A. Rangaswami Iyengar had given Rai a message from Motilal requesting him to be present at the meeting and saying that Motilal would like to see him at his room at Cecil before the meeting.[65] As he thought the pourparlers were at an end, he did not call on Motilal before the meeting, but in response to the special message he attended the meeting at which his resignation from the Swaraj Party, a longish typescript, was read out.

Sarojini Naidu even then kept up her efforts in the hope that the differences might be composed and the resignation withdrawn. Instead, four days later the resignation was passed on to the press and became the opening shot in the most memorable political bout of the year and of many a year perhaps.

Some papers called the resignation letter of Rai a formidable indictment of the Swaraj Party. Motilal came out with a reply to the 'indictment'. This reply did not much seek to justify the walkout tactics, which had been the main ground of resignation and were certainly the main theme of the letter under reply; but it let go no opportunity for sarcasm and ridicule. On merits, Motilal's principal contention seemed to be that Lajpat Rai was as much bound to the Swaraj Party as if he had been actually elected on the Swarajist ticket. His letter opened characteristically by congratulating Rai on "the well deserved compliment paid to you by such a friend of Indian rights and aspirations as the Pioneer." Discussing the objection to the walk-out tactics, Motillal underlined, again and again, to Rai's having been a party to the decisions at Kanpur session or having acquiesced in them - or even when differing (as at the Delhi A.I.C.C. meeting) not straightaway taking things to a rupture. "Slowly and gradually" came here very handy to Motilal to exercise his sarcasm on - perhaps it relieved him of the obligation to meet the argument. He went one still better in picking on another phrase which he found rather inviting - in Lajpat Rai's prouncing the Swarajist tactics a breach of faith with the constituencies and his declaring that he could not any longer be a party to this.[66]

Motilal Nehru disowned responsibility for non-ratification of the Sabarmati Pact for "if the agreement was as I take it to be, who was in the wrong in not confirming it?" and not without an undertone of sarcasm added, "If am glad to note that on the question of accepting offices your views remain unchanged, and trust you will adhere to them at least for some time to come".[67]

The Working Committe resolution enabling one community to block legislation, Motilal too did not endorse. He said it had been passed "in my absence under a misapprehension and is being reconsidered". The resolution of his own Provincial Committee recommending that the elections be fought by the Swaraj Party as had been done before the Kanpur resolution, instead of by the Congress direct, Motilal dismissed on a technical plea taking shelter in an allegation - denied by the Chairman of the meeting among others - that "it was the result of permitting a number of non-members to attend the meeting, and the Working Committee of the Congress had refused to look at the resolution". He did not wish to take any notice of the growing feeling among Congressmen that the Congress imprimatur be not embroiled in election squabbles.[68] Another choice fling came in dealing with the point in the letter of resignation - pleading for a united front instead of party antagonism.

There were other taunts too scattered in the body of the letter which accused Lajpat Rai of 'moderatism - taunts in which some saw a boomerang readiness to rush back to the glass-house from which they had issued forth. Motilal Nehru's letter concluded - like Lalaji's - on a note of cordiality, though even here he could not resist once again and at the wrong place rubbing in the "slowly and gradually" that he had picked out from Rai's letter as a target for ridicule - "I do not expect you to change your mind in a hurry, but am hopeful that 'slowly and gradually' you will find the faith that is in you, and proclaim it to the world in no uncertain terms".[69]

Blow and counter-blow followed in quick succession. The day Lajpat Rai's letter was published, Motilal wrote out his and sent it on to the press. Nehru's letter was delivered by Girdharilal of Amritsar to Lalaji on August 30 and on September 2 Rai sent his second letter, for he had found Motilal's reply "full of insinuations and innuendoes, half truths and mis-statements which I cannot let go unnoticed and unanswered".[70]

In his letter Motilal did not say whether he regarded the proposed amendment to the Criminal Procedure Code, which Lajpat Rai had said was going to be a serious infringement of the citizen's liberty, as not sufficiently important to warrant Swarajist attendance in the Assembly. He chose rather to take advantage of Malaviya's having supported the measure, and the jibe thrown at Malaviya was what Lalaji resented most of all in his reply. Referring to Malaviya as "your present comrade in arms" and recalling his speech in support of that Bill, Motilal asked, "I put it to you to say what place a Swarajist can have in company like this".[71]

The criticism that the walk-out was a vigorous demonstration had lost its value because of the exceptions - the "walk-ins" - and that it had otherwise proved a failure, for, the expection that the Swarajists would leave off the parliamentary pastime so that they might devote themselves to plying the Charkha, propagating Khadi and to promoting other items of the constructive programme had not much been fulfilled. Here too Motilal neither denied the allegation nor yet owned its truth, but told Lajpat Rai that the "walk-ins" has been sanctioned to oblige him and that if the "constructive" work had not been taken up, Lalaji as a member of the Swaraj Party was as much responsible as anyone else, Motilal knew well enough he had spent the recess in Europe.[72]

Lajpat Rai's second letter once again sought to prove that he had been returned to the Assembly as an independent candidate and that he had given no pledge to his voters, nor any assurances to the Swaraj Party that he would join or remain in that party. And about the walk-in clause and the use made thereof - Motilal's seeking to pass on the responsibility for these to Lajpat Rai - "All walk-ins took place in my absence from India and I did not participate in any decision relating to them". These walk-ins had included many sanctioned by the special committee and some even without the formality of a sanction and yet connived at and silently accepted. Again he referred to the Sabarmati pact. The fling about the *Pioneer* congratulations and that about moderatism evoked a ready reply: "The sting in your congratulation on the *Pioneer's* comment is only an electioneering tactic. It does not come with good grace from a gentleman who had been the recipient of many praises from that and other Anglo-Indian journals for his level headed moderate politics in the Assembly. You have followed a course which was a judicious combination of moderation and extremism a very proper thing to do as was evidenced by your speech relating to the desirability of Indian appeals being decided by the Privy Council in London rather than by an Indian Supreme Court in India and also by your support in the first stages of the contempt of courts bill. Both these actions I presume had the approval of the *Pioneer* and the Government".[74] But above all, Lajpat Rai resented Motilal's dig at Malaviya. In the concluding paragraph, he once again made an appeal for avoidance of acrimony - "let us fight a clean fight, if fight we must".

Thus, ended the fight with paper missiles. The two letters of hard hitting, of thrust and parry by two experienced duel fighters, gave a foretaste of the big fight that was to ensure in the general elections two months later. In his interview with the *Tribune* on September 5, 1926 Lajpat Rai repeated that in going to the Assembly he had accepted Raizada Hans Raj's unconditional offer, that the other Punjab members too had offered to make room for him, and none had laid down any conditions. He contended that the walk-out policy was harmful to the country, specially to the Hindus. He disclosed further that he was not likely to have resigned from the Swaraj Party if the party had decided to participate in the debates of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, and on the communal resolution, and that the pourparlers which continued even after his handling in the resignation came to a sudden end, with no chances of resumption in the immediate future, because of the insult to Malaviya in Motilal Nehru's letter.[76]

After the resignation from the Swaraj Party, Lajpat Rai collaborated with Madan Mohan Malaviya in organising the Independent Congress Party in the first week of September 1926. The President of the new party was Lala Lajpat Rai, General Secretary, Malaviya, Joint Secretaries, E.Raghavendra Rao (C.P.) and Lala Ram Prasad (Bihar). The party was similar to the Nationalist party Malaviya had launched in Delhi in March and which had been merged subsequently with the Responsive co-operation Party. In fact, it was the party of those Congressmen who wanted to have a parliamentary programme and who at the same time were dissatisfied with the Swarajist tactics - those who in general shared his own outlook and that of Malaviya and the Maharashtra group. The new party expressed itself against the "walk-out" programme of the Swarajists and also against the Congress policy on the communal question. Though committed to the ideal of communal unity, the party was not in favour of achieving that at the cost of legitimate Hindu interests.

In reply to a letter on the formation of the Independent Party, Col. Josiah C. Wedgewood wrote to Lajpat Rai, "No doubt, you are right in forming the new party, I still believe that if you could have avoided communal representation, democratic institutions could have been used to unite the two communities - would have brought them together on planes of economic interest". He added, "I only hope that your party may get power while you and Malaviya are still there to ensure the use of that power for those ideas to which he and you and I pinned our faith".[77]

Lajpat Rai's break with the Swaraj Party gave birth to a severe controversy in the Punjab Provincial Congress. Earlier, there was no much opposition to the Lala in the provincial Congress on account of his great influence. But now Satyapal, the Secretary of the Punjab Congress, Dunichand of Ambala, Gopichand and Girdharilal became more vocal in their criticism against him. They were close to Motilal Nehru who had also become bitter due to Lajpat Rai's resignation from the Swaraj Party. The forthcoming election of the Legislative Assembly made the differences wider and acute. Lajpat Rai wanted to contest the election in his province as an independent candidate. He, therefore, refused to sign the Congress pledge in August 1926.[78] Henceforth Satyapal recommended to the leaders of the All India Congress Committee to strike off his name from the list of the Congress candidates.[79] Gandhi who had great regard for Lajpat Rai strongly opposed Satyapal's recommendation. In a letter dated August 23, 1926, Gandhi wrote: "I understand what you say, but I do not appreciate your attitude towards Lalaji. There are many matters on which I do not agree with him, but his sincerity, his love of the country are undeniable. His self-sacrifice and unbroken record of service entitled him to our respect and affection and make him indispensable for any public work in the Punjab".[80] Even this letter of Gandhi could not change the mind of the opponents of Lajpat Rai, and the gulf in the Punjab Pradesh Congress continued.

On the eve of the elections Lajpat Rai started a vigorous propaganda in favour of Independent Congress Party. He made extensive tours, used vernacular newspapers of the Punjab and The Bombay Chronicle of Bombay to propagate his views. This frightened Satyapal. On November 4, 1926, in a letter to Motilal Nehru, Satyapal wrote about Lajpat Rai's influence and the miserable position of other parties thus: "Lajpat Rai is actively engaged in maligning Congress, Swaraj Party and the Congress nominees for legislative bodies. He is using all his eloquence and resources to run down the Congress. He has set up rival candidates against Congress nominees... The Congress in the Punjab has been mercilessly handled by Lajpat Rai and its hold on the people has been miserably loosened: but the vigorous vilifying campaign carried on by Lajpat Rai and his assistants against the Congress. It is, therefore that I approach you with a request that you will please take the trouble of visiting our province in order to strengthen our hands in the struggle".[81] Motilal Nehru put two candidates, Raizada Hansraj and Dewan Chamanlal, against Lajpat Rai in his two constituencies.[82] Raizada Hansraj was most unwilling for the fight and tried to dissuade his leader from putting up a candidate against Lalaji, but his advice was ignored and he was ordered to contest the seat. He loyally abided by the orders and entered the contest and for a while put forth his best, but it did not take him long to realise that he stood not the ghost of a chance, and so he virtually withdrew from the contest a good while before the actual polling. Moreover, Lajpat Rai's nomination was objected to on behalf of the Congress Party on the ground that he had been debarred by the Chief Court for having written a book or books which being considered seditions were banned by the Government. He was, therefore, disqualified from being elected to the Assembly - so urged the Congress rival at the scrutiny of his nomination paper. But Lalaji had forewarned himself against this posibility and by a representation to the High Court had the absurd order of 1917 set aside. When Motilal Nehru came down to Lahore to beard the lion in his own den, many Congressmen desired that Lajpat Rai and Malaviya should not be opposed, as their personal standing demanded that they should be in the legislature even if in certain matters they differed from the parliamentary leadership of the Congress, and also because it would unnecessarily embitter things and leave behind a bad legacy. Their point of view was placed by a few spokesmen before Motilal. It was urged before Panditji that the setting up of candidates against patriots of such eminence would be disliked by the voters and generally go against the Congress 'Party.[83] But Motilal had been assured of thumping victories by some of his lieutenants in the Punjab and because of their enormously miscalculated assurances he rode the high horse. Quoting Lloyd George, he told his interviewers he preferred the cobbler of his party to the leader of the rival one. When the results of the polling came he had to own not a defeat but a rout.[84]

Though bitterly opposed and harassed by the Swaraj Party and declared by Motilal Nehru to be of less account to him than any Swarajist cobbler, Lajpat Rai for his part, when he heard that some of the U.P. lieutenants of Malaviya were keenly pressing the desirability of setting up a candidate against Motilal, strongly opposed the proposal. In his private letter to Madan Mohan Malaviya on October 14, 1926, Lajpat wrote:

> I have read a statement in the press to the effect that the members of the Independent Congress Party in the U.P. are pressig you to contest the same seat as Pandit Motilal is expected to stand for in the coming elections of the Legislative Assembly. I hope the statement has no foundation in fact. In any case I would beg of you not to follow the advice of your friends in this matter, as in my judgement the country needs both of you in the Legislative Assembly.
>
> As for myself, I think I can take care of myself, I do not believe in the doctrine of retaliation.[85]

Thus, Lajpat Rai fought vigorously but did not attach an exaggerated importance to party level. The one regrettable episode on his side - but in which he had no hand - was the publication, in the Bande Mataram of a slanderous story against Motilal. Lajpat Rai was away from Lahore when this happened, but as soon as he came to know of it, he expressed his strongest disapproval. In this connection he also wrote to Gandhi that " I am not personally concerned in the matter at all".[86] He put up the matter before the Board of Directors.[87] After the elections he made the guilty paper apologise to Motilal unconditionally and to make amends to the Swarajist Chief's satisfaction.

Lajpat Rai defeated his rivals from both the constituencies. His enormous influence and popularity can be seen from the fact that the Punjab Congress Secretary, Dr. Satyapal, was badly defeated in the election. He lost his security deposit.[88] The resounding success of Lajpat Rai can be gauged from the ratio of the seats of Independent Congress Party and Swaraj Party, 13:2 and 2:0 in the Punjab Legislative Council and Central Legislative Assembly respectively. Rai secured 2987 votes against 106 in Jullundur division constituency and 7,553 against 1,607 in the West Punjab constituency.[89] These results revealed his popularity and political ascendency in the province. Jinnah congratulated Lajpat Rai telegraphically: "was waiting for result of your contest. Glad (at) your success. Trust we shall work together (for the) common good (of) both the communities".[90]

Jawaharlal Nehru happened to be in Switzerland by the side of Kamala Nehru in her illness. Just when he had finished the campaign tour and even before all the results had come, Motilal Nehru wrote to him a very despondent letter. The rout had so depressed him that he was seriously thinking of resigning from the Assembly and retiring from public life! Though "still acclaimed as the leader of the strongest party", he could not forget that not only in the Punjab he had been beaten hollow, but in his own U.P. What had happened was "nothing short of a disaster".[91] His most amazing confession was "I had hardly any workers worth the name to help me in my own Province". This surely could not be put down to the credit of "Birla's money" or the "lies" of the "Malaviya - Lala - gang".[92] But whatever the reasons the upshot was "I am thoroughly disgusted and am now seriously thinking of retiring from public life".[93] He wanted to keep quiet about this till the Congress met at Gauhati in 3-4 weeks from the date of letter. He was thinking of sending his resignation from the Assembly after the Congress session, but it appears that the favourable session trends changed his plans.

Forgetting the bitter memoiries of the acrimonious debate of the election days, Motilal and Lajpat Rai re-established their cordial relations to work for the national cause. It is obvious from the private letters what passed between them during this period.

In the the Central Legislative Assembly (since 1925) Lajpat Rai fervently espoused the popular causes and allied himself with the Congress in opposing the unjust measures of the Government. In a number of stirring and memorable speeches he brought about the evil effects of British rule in terms of growing poverty, unemployment, price-rise and exploitation of India's resources to the advantage of Britain. Forcefully and eloquently he demanded that India must be given self-rule. By his selfless work, honesty of purpose and dedicated nationalistic activity he won for himself a place of highest respect among the Indians.

Soon after the elections the Congress was meeting at Gauhati in Assam under the presidentship of S. Srinivasa Iyengar. Lajpat Rai's colleagues were for making a determined effort to get a fair hearing and, if possible, a favourable verdict from the Congress. Malaviya and Jayakar strongly urged Lajpat Rai's participation in the Gauhati deliberations. On the eve of session Lajpat Rai met Gandhi at Calcutta on December 22, 1926. In his talk he said, "I am not attending the Congress at Gauhati in order to avoid a duel with friends".[94] But he reaffirmed his faith in the programme Gandhi had given to the country in 1920 (i.e. boycott of councils, courts, etc.) and said, "if God Wills it, I have the faith that the same wonderful performance may be repeated here as in Africa. If only sixteen colleagues stick faithfully to the programme here, they also would grow into 16,000".[95] The news of Swami Shraddhanand's assassination was received by Lajpat Rai at Calcutta on December 23 and the next day he conveyed it to Gandhi, who was on his way to Gauhati to attend the A.I.C.C. meeting. The telegram reached him at Sorbhog, a wayside station. Gandhi replied to Lalaji "Go Delhi prevent excitement or resentment".[96] Rai left Calcutta for Delhi the same night. His friends M.R.Jayakar and Kelkar also could not attend the Congress session due to their illness, the field was left clear to the Swarajists. The Swarajists succeeded in achieving their aims. Criticising the Gauhati Congress, Lajpat Rai wrote: "The two things which the country had expected of this Congress were (a) unity between political workers, and (b) a lead regarding the communal situation. The Congress has failed in both".[97] In the Congress Khadi resolution was moved, wherein it was felt that Swaraj could be attained "by the Congress linking itself with the masses through the spread of Khaddar". Lajpat Rai was unhappy. He stressed that no other individual item of the Congress propaganda had brought about greater dishonesty and insincerity among the Congressmen than Khaddar.[98]

Since his arrival from Europe in mid August 1926, Lajpat Rai was terribly busy in political activities of the country. His work as a leader of the Independent Congress Party was very strenuous. During the session of the Central Legislative Assembly at Delhi he had been feeling the strain. When the session was over he made up his mind to give himself some rest and medical check up in Europe. About his health he wrote: "From repeated experience of Indian resorts of health (the hills and the seasides) I have found that the climate and environments do not give me the rest I need. The climate of the hills does not suit me. My stomach gets deranged. Moreover the call speeches and meetings, etc., is so incessant and insistent that one finds it impossible to resist it without giving grave offence to friends and constituents. Life on Indian hills is no less expensive than in Europe".[99] On May 4, 1927, he set sail by the P & O boat S.S.Rawalpindi and put up at the National Liberal Club in London.[100]

During his stay in London, Paris, Vichy, etc., he eschewed political work in the interest of his health. He spent most of time for his medical check up.[101] He regularly informed his Indian friends about the development in Great Britain. It is evident from his private correspondence with Gandhi, Malaviya, M.R.Jayakar, G.D.Birla, Achint Ram, etc. He met a few friends of the Labour Party, Under Secretary of State for India and arranged dinner in honour of Col. Wedgwood, M.P.[102] On his return on August 19, 1927 by S.S.Razmak, he wrote:

> I saw nothing in particular, and did nothing but take rest and get treated by doctors. From the very first I had determined on this trip being an absolutely non-political one. In November last I had had a nervous collapse and I did not recover completely therefrom even up till the end of March (1927). In April again I had a bad attack of liver

> during my tour in Sind. So I kept to my decision. On board the ship while going outward I did no work and for the first ten days felt very well indeed - much improved and much refreshed. In the Mediterranean, unfortunately, I had a chill and contracted a cold from which I suffered more or less for five weeks. I was in London only for four weeks and a few days. During this period I did no work, saw no one in particular except a few friends of the Labour Party. I did not ask the Secretary of State for India for an interview and did not even go to the India Office. I met the Under Secretary for India at a dinner at the House of Commons, where I said or heard nothing political. This talk was mostly about poetry, literature or the prayer book.[103]

National activities in India suffered a serious set back with the collapse of the non-cooperation movement. The rising tide of communal passions further greatly weakened it. The Hindu-Muslim unity in the heyday of the non-cooperation movement was now a mere memory. Trust had given way to distrust. Earlier, the Moplah outbreak in 1921 in which the Muslims of Malabar wrecked their vengeance on their Hindu neighbours was a painful memory to the Hindus. In 1923-24 there were communal outbreaks at Sambhar, Amritsar, Gulbarga and Kohat. Thus, the short lived Hindu-Muslim unity was disappearing. It was a great set-back to the national struggle.

In 1927 a new life was infused into the national struggle. The main factor that brought about this sudden and unexpected revival was the decision of the British Government to appoint the Indian Statutory Commission to enquire into the question of Indian Reforms. The Government of India Act of 1919 contained a provision that a commission would be appointed after ten years to advise the British Government as to what administrative reforms might be introduced in India. A Commission of Seven members headed by an English jurist, Sir John Simon, was about to come to India in 1927. The composition of that commission infuriated the Indians because there was not a single Indian member on it. It was a negation of India's right to make her own future constitution. British disclaimers, notwithstanding, the composition of the Simon Commission was looked upon by Indian public opinion as a calculated insult to the Indian people. Following the Government's announcement of November 8, 1927, a general wave of indignation swept across the entire country. Contrary to official assessment almost all parties were unanimous in their protests, and a strong movement gained momentum to boycott the commission and its enquiries. By the end of the year all major parties including the Indian National Congress, the National Liberal Federation and All India Hindu Mahasabha had joined their hands to boycott the Commission. As regards the Muslim League, Jinnah and his followers joined the boycott, but Mohammad Shafi's group in Punjab voted for cooperation.

The appointment of the all white commission did not come as a surpirse to Lajpat Rai. While in England in 1926, he had carefully observed the trends in the Indian policy of the Conservative Government and the commission's composition too was anticipated by him. From the very beginning he was clear that the right course for him as well as for the country was to boycott the commission. Immediately after its formal announcement he categorically stated that he was "not going to associate with the commission in any shape or manner - not that I am sure the boycott will prove effective, but because it is repugnant to my political sense to do so".[104] He took exception not merely to the exclusion of Indians, but to the very policy which was behind the appointment of the commission. He knew from his past experience that their (Indian's) advice to the Government had no significance, their representatives no force and their co-operation no value. According to him it was waste of time and energy to try to offer co-operation. Questioning the right of the British Parliament to decide the type of the constitution which India was to have, Lajpat Rai held that the boycott should be irrevocable and nothing should be said of the terms on which Indians could cooperate. Even the appointment of a few Indians on the commission would not persuade him to lend his support to it. Lajpat Rai sent a cable to Colonel Wedgwood: "No change in the scheme of commission acceptable unless an equal number of non-official Indians are appointed on equal status".[105] Lajpat Rai was of the opinion that Indians alone should decide their own constitution. He suggested a round table conference of a hundred eminent Indians of all parties and communities to take up the question of framing the constitution. A committee of twenty-one members might meet at Delhi or Bombay to start the work of drafting. The Round Table Conference might be fixed for January 15, 1928. Any constitution drafted by the Conference should be forwarded to the Secretary of state.[106] He organized a vigorous campaign against the commission through press and public platforms. He warned those Hindu leaders of the Punjab who were inclined to co-operate with the commission that their pro-government attitude would not effect any change in the pro-Muslim policy of the Government.

The attempts of the leaders of the depressed classes like Dr. Ambedkar and M.C.Rajah were considered by him to be most disastrous to the unity of India. He realized that much injustice had been done to the depressed classes and the Hindu caste system was the bane of Hindu society. But he did not like the attitude of the leaders in playing into the hands of the vested Indian and foreign interests.[107]

Similarly, he regarded the attitude of the Muslims towards the Simon Commission as unhelpful. He believed that all those Muslims who advocated the cause of communal representation were more spontaneous in according cooperation to the commission. Some like Dr. Shafat Ahmed Khan even submitted a memorandum with "mischievous and false statements of facts" for the Muslims of U.P.[108] Lajpat Rai was dissatisfied with the political atmosphere of the country.

As early as February 16, 1928, Lajpat Rai moved a resolution in the Central Legislative Assembly urging the boycott of the Commission "in all stages and in all forms".[109] During the debate in the Assembly he said that he had no faith in the bonafides of the Government, in the competance of the Commission either or of the people who had appointed the Commission. He said: "..... All that the Commission will do will be practically recording in a gramophone what they will be told by the bureaucracy here and eventually they will be recording in another gramophone their recommendations in consultation with some other people in England".[110] He also questioned the competence of any Commission to settle the fitness of nations to rule themseives. Their ignorance of India, Indian history and politics was, in his judgement, their greatest disqualification for the task which had been entrusted to them. He also questioned the Commission's ability to settle the Indian problems. He believed that the Indian question could be successfully tackled if representatives from England and India sit in a spirit of conciliation and accommodation".[111]

It is significant that whereas the nationalist temper brought the resolution boycotting the Commission, Zulifiqar Ali Khan asked the House to cooperate with it. No better explanation is provided for this state of affairs than what is contained in the words of Motilal Nehru who said: "The Simon Commission is to receive its inspiration from those whose self interest or fear compels them to stand by the bureaucracy who are the people upon whom Lord Birkenhead relies? They are millions of Muslims, millions of depressed classes, millions of Anglo-Indians and commercial communities".[112] Malaviya exhorted the members of the House by saying that the honour of the motherland demanded that all her sons should organise and carry out a complete boycott of the Commission throughout her length and breadth.[113] Lajpat Rai's resolution was carried with the overwhelming support of the Indian elected members amid cries of "Bande Mataram".

In December 1927, the Indian National Congress met at Madras for its annual session and decided to convene an All Parties Conference to draft a constitution for free India. The satirical tone of Birkenhead challenging Indian's ability to frame her own constitution helped in forging a united front. The Congress proposal for All Parties Conference was universally acclaimed.

The All Parties Conference met in Delhi in February 1928 under the Chairmanship of M.A.Ansari, the Congress President. The first meeting of the Conference was attended by over a hundred delegates including Malaviya, Motilal Nehru, Lajpat Rai, Mohamed Ali, Sapru, Hasrat Mohani, Moonje, Jinnah, Shafi Daudi, Nawab Ismal Khan, Seth Haji Abdullah Haroon of Sind, H.N.Kunzru, Jairamdas Daulatram, and the Raja of Mahmudabad.[114] Amongst them were representatives of the Congress, the Liberal Party, the Hindu Mahasabha, and the Muslim League. The Second meeting of the All Parties Confereence met in May 1928 at Bombay.

The All Parties Conference appointed a committee under the Chairmanship of Motilal Nehru to draft a constitution for free India and to report on the communal problem. The Nehru Committee Report was published on August 15, 1928 and its detailed recommendations were placed before the All India Parties Conference at Lucknow from August 28 to 31, 1928. It was an impressive document which covered a wide range of constitutional issues. An introductory chapter made out a case for a full Dominion Status while three chapters dealt with the communal problem. The final recommendations which bore the impress of a considerable amount of labour and thought were given in chapter seven. These include definite proposals relating to reservation of seats, the form of electorate, and the future status of Sind and the North-West Frontier Province. In addition to this, there was a Declaration of Rights which guaranteed religious liberty and cultural autonomy to each individual and group. It aimed at allaying Muslim fears of Hindu domination. The report declared, "We cannot have one community domineering over another". It went on to add: "We may not be able to prevent this entirely, but the object we should aim at is not to give domination to one over another but to prevent the harassment and exploitation of any individual and group by another". The authors of the report assumed that if religious liberty was guaranteed and cultural autonomy provided for, the communal problem would be solved.[115] Motilal persuaded Aney and Mangal Singh, who represented the Hindu Mahasabha and the Sikh League respectively, to agree to the separation of Sind from Bombay and its elevation, in company with the North-West Frontier Province, to the status of full province.[116] The report, however, rejected the

Muslim demand for reservation of seats in Bengal and the Punjab.[117] Its verdict was that reservation of seats for majorities was incompatible with real representative and responsible government. Moreover, the report concluded that the Bengali and the Punjab Muslims did not require any 'adventitious aid' to secure the full benefit of their natural majority. Their population was so distributed that in whatever way the electorates were formed, they were sure to capture a majority of seats in the legislative councils and the local bodies.[118] And finally, the argument that the Hindus who were a minority in population in the Punjab and Bengal but were a majority in voting registers ceased to have any validity under a system of adult franchise recommended by the Nehru report.

In the Hindu-majority provinces, however, the authors of the Nehru report were compelled by 'force of circumstances to introduce a temporary element of communalism' in the form of reservation of seats for Muslim minorities in proportion to their population both in central and the provincial legislatures. This meant that the weightage fixed for Muslims under the Lucknow Pact and the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms was done away with. Separate electorates were also abolished. According to the report, the principle of weightage had no place in joint or mixed electorates.

And finally, there was the thorny question of Muslim representation in the central legislature. Muslims claimed that their population was one-third of the total and entitled them to a similar proportion of seats in the central legislature. Their population, however, was so unevenly distributed that they could not be certain of securing one-third of the seats. So one-third be reserved for their community. But, with the exception of T.B.Sapru, no member of the committee accepted this demand. In fact, it was maintained that Muslims formed less than one fourth of the total population of British India and were not entitled to have reservation over and above that proportion in the central legislature.[119]

In sum then, the Nehru Report conceded some of the important demands of Muslims: the separation of

Sind, the introduction of constitutional reforms in the North-West Frontier and Baluchistan and constitutional safeguards for religious freedom. The Report recommended reservation of seats for Muslims only in provinces where they were in a minority. By a stroke of pen, its authors abolished separate electorates, discarded reservation of seats for Muslim majorities in the Punjab and Bengal, and rejected the principle of weightage for Muslim minorities.

Inside the Congress, the Nehru Report provided opposition on an entirely different ground, viz., its acceptance of Dominion Status. The Congress was committed to the goal of 'complete independence' which meant secession from the British Empire. The Working Committee itself stated that 'there can be not true freedom till the British connection is severed.'[120] But the Nehru Report had a special political significance: as the 1928 Calcutta resolution of the Congress stated, it represents the largest measure of agreement attained among the important parties in the country.

To nationalists, the report was 'the most authoritative statement and exposition of national demands', and its recommendations relating to the communal problem were regarded as 'bold, out-spoken and fearless'.[121] Its great merit was that, unlike the Lucknow Pact it did not propose any abrupt changes in the relative position of the various communities in the legislatures. In the Hindu majority provinces, there was relief at the abolition of separate electorates and weightages for Muslims.[122]

In the Punjab, the Nehru Report identified three natural belts or areas: the predominantly Muslim area, the neutral area but with Muslim majority, and the Hindu-Sikh area. In the north and northwest of the province where Muslims were overwhelmingly strong, no other community could 'encroach on their reserve'.[123] In the South, there was a small 'Hindu-Sikh Zone' where the two communities were equally strong. This zone included the districts of Hissar, Rohtak, Gurgaon, Karnal, Ambala, Simla, Kangra, Hoshiarpur and Ludhiana. Between these two zones there was a third area where Muslims were predominant, such as Lahore and

Gurdaspur districts, but they were not so many as in the north and north-west. The authors of the Nehru Report presumed that the Punjabi Muslims would capture 47.3 per cent of the legislative council seats from the 'overwhelmingly Muslim zone', while the Hindus and Sikhs would jointly capture nearly 30 per cent. The remaining 23 per cent of seats lay in either a predominantly Muslim area or in districts where Muslims were numerically strong. 'Allowing for every contingency', ran the report, we cannot conceive of Muslims not capturing enough seats in this area to give them a clear majority in the provincial legislature.[124] Many Punjabi Muslims were convinced by these arguments. Barkat Ali, the Vice-President of the Punjab Muslim League, stated that after the introduction of adult franchise the question of reservation of seats for the majority communities would loose all practical significance.[125] Sardar Habibullah Khan, Deputy President of the Punjab Legislative Council, and Mohammad Alam, leader of the Nationalist Party in the Council, agreed that the Nehru Report recommendations were beneficial to Punjabi Muslims.[126] Even leading members of the Punjab Khilafat Committee like Kitchlew, Zafar Ali Khan[127] and Abdul Kadir[128] rallied round the Nehru Report.

In the words of Lajpat Rai this constitution making body (Nehru Committee) could not evoke so much interest and enthusiasm but for Lord Birkenhead's challenge to India's intellectual capacity to frame a constitution.[129] In a public meeting at Lahore, Lajpat Rai welcomed the Nehru Report, and moved a resolution in its appreciation. He characterised the report as "a monumental work worthy of the best tradition of Indian public life".[130] He unhesitatingly accepted the goal of Dominion Status as outlined in the Report. He did not subscribe to the view of severing connection with the British altogether.

Some leaders were not satisfied with the Nehru Committee report because in their opinion the Committee had tampered with the goal of complete political independence set up by the Madras Congress in 1927 and lowered it to Dominion status. Being mature, practical and farsighted leader, Lajpat Rai suggested that under present circumstances "we should honestly, whole heartedly and sincerely work for dominion status".[131] He felt that the British would not accept even the dominion status unless compelled them to do so. In this connection he raised seven points in favour of Nehru report.

(1) That dominion status, as at present understood, secures to us full independence and freedom to remain within the commonwealth as long as it is in our interest to do so.

(2) That the partnership of the Commonwealth does not mean voting by population and that in case any dominion finds that it is out-voted by virtue of race prejudice or other similar considerations, it is free to dissolve the partnership.

(3) That the first task of the Indian nationalists is to take the Indian States with them. No attempt in this direction has the ghost of a chance if you declare complete political Independence as your immediate goal. That a combination of the British Government and the Indian States against you will be a formidable obstacle in the way of your political progress.

(4) That the cry of complete political independence leads people away from constructive political and social work and is a disturbing element in the nation building departments of the country.

(5) That it gives the British an excuse for repression and suppression. I recognise that in the case of subject peoples' repression and suppression is sometimes more beneficial to the political freedom than petty conciliations and superficial concessions. But even then in the present circumstances of India with economic helplessness staring us in the face at every step, the balance of advantage lies in not giving the British an additional excuse for excessive repression and suppression.

(6) That any practical active steps towards complete political independence can not be taken except in secrecy and through revolutionary violence. The preachers of non-violence may talk as much as they like but they will not advance an inch towards the goal unless they actively grapple with the problem of how and by what means.

(7) That the dream of an Asiatic Federation is a mere fantasy, and we cannot build upon it.[132]

Lajpat Rai was further of opinion that those who declared complete Political Independence as their immediate goal could not honourably remain members of councils or the Assembly.[133] Thus, he supported the case for Dominion Status, keeping in view the future membership of the British Commonwealth of Nations, the future cooperation of the Indian States, and the hostility of the Government. He did not believe in any day dreaming on the question of the future political set up of the country. But at the same time he would not oppose the propaganda by the younger Congressmen for complete Independence.[134] For Lajpat Rai the happiest part of the Nehru Report was the abolition of separate electorates and the abolition of communal representation except for certain minorities for a period of ten years. It was, in fact, a reaffirmation of his own stand against the sinister principle of separate communal representation which had been accepted both in the Congress-League Scheme of 1916 and the Bengal Pact of 1923. He earnestly pleaded that the Report should be judged from a national point of view and not from a narrow angle. Lajpat Rai pointed out emphatically that the Committee's conception of the future Government of India was the only one on which the building of a free India was possible. He declared, "those who will oppose it will practically oppose Swaraj and may be justly described as the enemies of India".[135] He denounced even those Punjab Hindu leaders who were against the acceptance of the Report, and who were asking for separate electorates and reservation of seats for Hindus in the provincial legislature. He sounded a note of warning to those Punjabi detractors of the

Nehru Report who claimed to be the champions of the Hindu interests. He asked them to desist from a course which would alienate the Punjab Hindus from the rest of Hindu India. He also urged the English to concede the recommendations of the Report which, he said, were "reasonable" and "just". Failure to accept the Report, Lajpat Rai feared, might make India "a hot-bed of revolutionary activities".[136]

From February 1928 onwards Lajpat Rai was chiefly pre-occupied with the task of mobilizing public opinion in favour of the total boycott of Simon Commission and later on for the publicity of the Nehru Committee Report. In April and May he visited Kashmir, Madras City, Trichiropoly, Ernakulam, Cape Comorin and Trivandrum. In his utterances he suggested that a house to house propaganda should be undertaken in order to obtain signatures to a manifesto declaring the determination of the people not to give evidence before the Statutory Commission or cooperate with it in any manner. His tour aroused considerable public enthusiasm. The various meetings which he addressed were largely attended. Thousands signed the manifesto protesting against the Simon Commission.[137]

On his return Lajpat Rai found discontent and sharp differences among the major communities of the Punjab on account of Nehru Committee Report. Many leaders of the three chief communities of Punjab were in favour of separate representation, and they demanded more seats than their population warranted. But the Report regarded communal representation highly injurious for the national growth. To win their support in favour of the Report Lajpat Rai convened fourteenth session of the Punjab Political Conference at Lyallpur from September 28 to 30, 1928. On his invitation, Ansari was also present. In the Conference the two important subjects discussed were: firstly, the Simon Commission and the decision of political India to boycott it and secondly, the Nehru Report. It railed against the members of the Punjab Legislative Council who had betrayed the cause of the nation by forming a Committee to cooperate with the Commission as well as the Punjab members of the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly who had taken any part whether active or passive in the formation of the Central Committee for the same purpose.[138] In his speech the Lala asked the Muslims, the Hindus and the Sikhs to accept the recommendations of the Report which, in his opinion, would prove useful in the advancement of Nationalism.[139] Ansari also spoke in favour of the Report. However, in the meeting lajpat Rai had to encounter determined opposition from many Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs; they persisted in their demand for separate representation. Bhai Parmanand, a leading leader of Hindu Mahasabha, was strongly in favour of reservation of seats for the Hindus. In this connection Lajpat Rai informed Motilal, "Bhai Parmanand's party at Lahore has gained a certain amount of strength. Some high placed Hindu officials are supporting the demand for reservation of seats for the Hindu minorities. I am seeing the Hindu leaders of Lahore one by one and aim winning them over to my side. This evening I have invited 4 or 5 of them to my house for consultation".[140] Demand for separate Muslim representation was voiced by Zafar Ali Khan, a leading leader of the Muslim League. The Sikhs too, by and large, were in favour of separate representation. In the face of this stiff opposition Lajpat Rai's task was most arduous, but ultimately he succeeded. He made a forceful plea in favour of Nehru Report and exhorted them to work for the unity of the nation. He moved a resolution in favour of Nehru Committee Report and in spite of opposition from some individuals like Bhai Parmanand he was able to carry the resolution.[141] The passing of this resolution is a measure of Lajpat Rai's popularity and his political hold on the province.

During his brief stay in Simla, Lajpat Rai attended a meeting of the Hindu Mahasabha in which a resolution in favour of the Nehru's Committee Report was passed. He was the moving spirit behind the resolution. It greatly antagonised Bhai parmanand. Consequently, he resigned from the Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha.[142]

As the day of the impending visit of the Simon Commission approached popular enthusiasm in favour of the Nehru Report gained momentum. On October 11, a deputation of the All Parties Boycott Committee started a tour of propaganda in favour of the Nehru Report. Lajpat Rai and other leaders,[143] addressed public meetings at Jullundur[144], Ludhiana[145] and Gujranwala.[146] An outstanding feature of all these meetings was the stress on communal harmony.

Another method was appeals and messages which served as affective means of mobilising public opinion against the Simon Commission and preparing the people of Lahore psychologically for staging anti-Simon demonstrations. The Punjab All Parties' Committee issued an appeal to the people of the Punjab to vindicate national honour by observing the following programme on the day the Simon Commission visited your towns:

(1) Organise a large demonstration with black flags at the Railway Station and in the town.

(2) Hold a public meeting to condemn the appointment of the Simon Commission against the united wish of our country; and those Punjab Legislators who have betrayed the cause of the country by agreeing to cooperate with the Simon Commission.

(3) The Punjab All Parties' Committee expects every Punjabi to register his strong protest against the national insult by putting up black flags on every house and every shop.[147]

The Indian National Congress suggested some practical measures to make it effective. These included mass-demonstrations all over India on the day members of Commission set foot in this country, and similar demonstrations in every city on the day it was visited by them; refusal of the legislators to co-operate with the Commission or helping their enquiry in any way; rejection of the demand for grant in connection with the Commission and social boycott of the members of the Commission.[148]

Further, Lajpat Rai worked whole heartedly for the acceptance of the Nehru Report. He made an effort to win over certain editors of vernacular papers like Maulana Zafar Ali of Zamindar and Krishna of Pratap[149] who were not in favour of the Report. It appears that he met with some success in this endeavour. Many Punjab papers which had hitherto opposed the report began to publish articles and editorials pleading for the acceptance of the Report.[150] Lajpat Rai asked Feroz Chand, the editor of Bande Mataram to step up publicity in favour of the Report.

To make the Nehru report popular among the people Lajpat Rai had drawn a comprehensive programme. He decided to start weekly bulletin containing pro-report views and articles. For this four pages of Bande Mataram, Sunday edition were to be adopted. He proposed to distribute its 2 to 5 thousands copies free of cost among the people.[151] Secondly, in this connection he was in correspondance with national leaders particularly Motilal Nehru, Santanam, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, M.R.Jayakar, M.M.Malaviya, N.S. Hardikar, etc.[152] He sought their views to make the report popular in their respective areas. Thirdly, he invited Hardikar to become his publicity Secretary for the purpose of Nehru recommendations. Hardikar had already worked with him in America as Secretary Home Rule League of America and now was associated along with Jawaharlal Nehru as General Secretary of Hindustani Sewa Dal, a progressive younger auxiliary of the Congress. Hardikar gladly accepted the assignment provided he said, "Firstly, I should be allowed to carry on Dal's propaganda side by side. Secondly, I will work as more a travelling propagandist than publicity officer. Thirdly, I shall take the ideal to be independence and dominion status as the irreducible minimum".[153] He was keen to perform the duty by remaining in Karnatak and Maharashtra.[154] Lajpat Rai did not want to impose his views on any progressive leader of the nationalist school.

Again, while presiding over the Provincial Hindu Conference of Agra at Etawah on October 27-28, Lajpat Rai reiterated that leaving aside a few, the Hindus in general accepted the recommendations of the Nehru Report. For the Muslims he said:

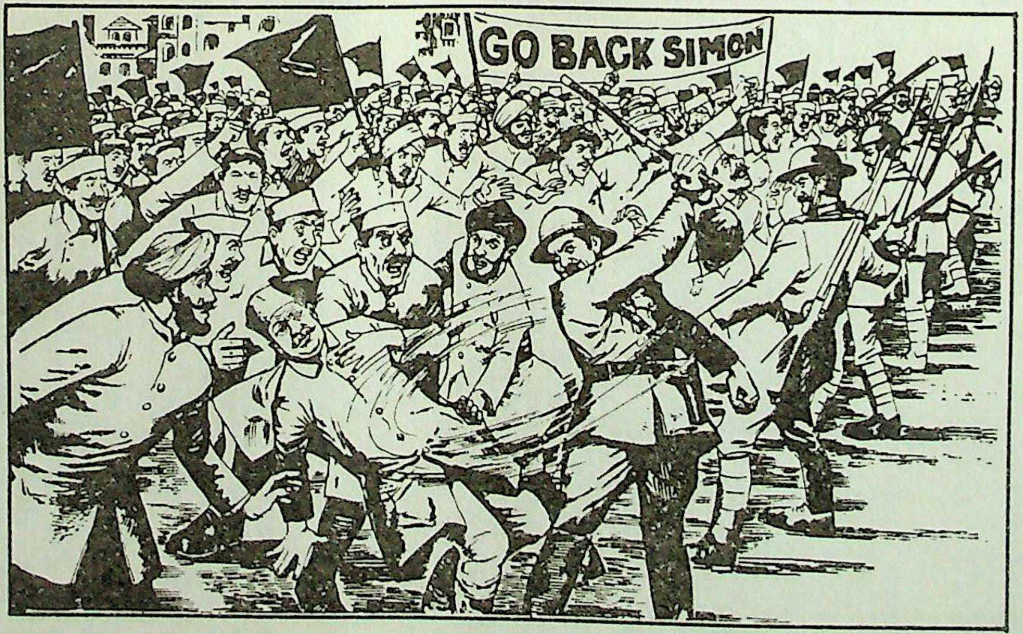
> "The principles of the Nehru Report are the only principles on which a democratic constitution of India is possible to be framed at present. It provides ample guarantees for minorities..."[155]

Clarifying the stand of the Hindus on communal representation, he said:

> "It should be understood that they stand for a complete elimination of the principle of communal representation from the Constitution of the country. If they accept the retention of it to the extent it is to be found in the report at present, they do so out of a profound sense of necessity, the necessity of reconciling Mohammadan sentiment and feeling to that extent."[156]

Lajpat Rai made strenuous efforts to mobilize public opinion against the Simon Commission. He arranged an All Parties Committee which was attended by the delegates of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs. It was resolved to arrange a demonstration against the arrival of Simon Commission in Lahore.[157] In fact it was largely on account of his exertions that a majority of the Punjab leaders were ready to boycott the forthcoming visit of the white Commission. Despite his old age and ill health, he was in the forefront of the movement to boycott it.

According to the scheduled programme, a largely attended public meeting of the citizens of Lahore, presided over by Mohammad Alam, M.L.C., was held outside Mochi Gate on October 30, 1928. Amongst those, who addressed the meeting, were Lajpat Rai, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mangal Singh, Ghazi Abdul Rehman, Maulana Abdul Qadir of Kasur and others. Black flags in thousands were then distributed by Lala Kedar Nath Sehgal to the audience, who formed themselves into a procession and marched towards the Railway Station, shouting "Go Back Simon, Go Back".[158] The procession was led by Lajpat Rai, Dr. Mohammad Alam, Maulana Abdul Qadir, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, Lala Bodh Raj, M.L.C., Raizada Hansraj, M.L.C., Dr. Satyapal, Amar Singh Jhabal, Duni Chand, Sardar Mangal Singh, Sardul Singh Cavisheer, Ghazi Abdul Rehman, Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava, M.L.C., and



The unwanted and unwelcome Simon Commission visited India. During its boycott and resultant repression, Lala Lajpat Rai, leader of Punjab succumbed to injuries of a baton charge

K. Santanam, Dr. Khan Chand Dev, Kedar Nath Sehgal, Maulana Daud Ghaznavi and others.[159]

While Lajpat Rai was leading a mass procession against it in front of the Lahore railway station, he was severely struck by the police with sticks and batons.

Evidence of K.L.Jolly,[160] a student participant in the demonstration, showed that the trouble took place owing to police high-handedness. A British police Sergeant started the scuffle by aiming a blow at Lala Lajpat Rai with a knobbed hunter. Lajpat Rai received injuries on his chest. In trying to protect him Dr. Gopi Chand, Dr, Satyapal, Pt. K.Santanam, Ghazi Abdur Rehman and Maulana Duad Ghaznavi also received injuries. The Tribune attributed the whole trouble to the provocation given by the police.[161] According to Raizada Hansraj, the processionists were enjoined to remain non-violent even under the gravest provocation and no member of the procession was permitted to carry even a stick with him.[162] The fact that the crowd was peaceful, had been corroborated by no less a person than Lajpat Rai himself. In his statement to The Tribune, he said that "... the crowd was perfectly orderly and non-violent except that, it was shouting 'Simon Commission Go Back'. The barbed wire on the road was not complete... I must admire the self-restraint of the crowd, which kept peaceful marvellously in spite of being infuriated at the assault on me. The same European official, referred to above, assaulted Raizada Hansraj, M.L.C., Dr. Gopi Chand, M.L.C. and Dr. Satyapal".[163] But the official version which Lajpat Rai found full of lies, held his attempt to enter the prohibited area and brickbatting by the crowd reponsible for the occurrences of October 30.[164] Describing the police attack unprovoked and wanton Lajpat Rai said, "We were absolutely peaceful and gave no provocation to the police to attack us. But quite unprovoked a police officer began to strike us lathis. He had a knobbed hunter in his hand. He gave me two blows and two of his constables gave me another two. One of these blows given to me was aimed at my heart, and very near to my heart I received a stroke which has caused a bruise sufficiently long and broad".[165] From Lala's account it appears that the blows were deliberately aimed at him. The physical injuries that he received were not very serious but the proud leader felt very shocked at being struck. The brutal attack hurt him. At a public meeting held the same evening at Lahore, he condemned the unwarranted and merciless action of the police officials. After narrating the circumstances of the brutal attack he warned the Government about the possible consequences of its policy of repression. He asserted:

> I want to say from this platform, that every blow that was hurled at us this afternoon, was a nail in the coffin of the British Empire. Nobody who has seen that sight is ever likely to forget it. It has sunk deep into our soul. We have to avenge ourselves of this cowardly attack, not by violently attacking them but by gaining our freedom. I wish to warn the Government that if a violent revolution takes place in the country, the responsibility for bringing it about will fall on such officers as mis-behaved themselves this afternoon. Our creed still stands and we are pledged to struggle of peaceful non-violence. But if the Government and its officers continue to behave like this I would not wonder if the youngmen were to go out of our hands and do whatever they chose with the object of gaining the freedom of their country. I do not know whether I shall be alive to see that day. But whether alive or dead, if that day is forced on them by the Government, my spirit from behind will bless them for their struggle.[166]

Mahatma Gandhi was also inclined to believe that the police was guilty of mishandling the situation and Lajpat Rai did well in suffering the blows. Later on, in his article, "The Inevitable" published in Young India, Gandhi elaborated his viewpoint, "Whilst I should be sorry it would not surprise me if a discovery was made that assault was part of a deliberate plan. I admit that the provocation, viz., the very fact of the boycott, no matter how peaceful, was quite enough without the fraudulent story concocted by the police. I call the police version fraudulent because I would anyday trust Lalaji's word against a host of interested witnesses that the police can bring to its assistance..."[167] It was evident that official high-handedness had alienated friends and foes of the British Raj among Indians.[168]

A wave of indignation and protest spread over the entire country. A spate of messages, condemning unprovoked assault and applauding the leaders and the demonstrators, overwhelmed the Government. In order to appease the indignant leaders and the Indian public, the Punjab Government issued a communique on November 7, 1928 regarding the occurrence of October 30. It conceded that the departmental enquiry, which had endorsed the conduct of the police officers, had failed to satisfy Indians. Hence, the Punjab Government instructed D.J.Boyd, Commissioner of Rawalpindi, to hold an executive enquiry.

Irrespective of political affiliations, there was an insistent demand for public enquiry into police conduct. Even Muhammad Shafi and Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan, loyalist in outlook, conceded that a thorough investigation of the police conduct was called for.[169] Resolutions expressing horror over the cowardly and unprovoked police assault and demanding punishment of the culprits were passed. Such resolutions were passed at public meetings, composed of Hindus and Muslims in Multan, Ludhiana and other places. Apart from these resolutions, Rai Sahib Mohanlal of the Punjab Legislative Council gave notice to the Government for moving a resolution[170] on asking it to appoint a Committee consisting of officials and non-officials of the House with a majority of the latter for enquiry into the conduct of officials who assaulted the leaders at Lahore near Railway Station on October 30. Contrary to official expectation, Lajpat Rai, Dr. Mohammed Alam and Dr. Satyapal advised boycott of the departmental enquiry and urged for an open enquiry.[171] Mahatma Gandhi applauded the decision of the Punjab leaders not to appear as witnesses before the departmental committee.[172]

Lajpat Rai did not survive the assault very long. Within a week of the incident (November 3) he went to Delhi to attend the All-Parties Conference, and returned to Lahore on November 8 before his scheduled programme because of ill health. While in Delhi he told M.R.Jayakar: "I feel weak, but apart from the wound I feel that I am not the same man as before. I feel that it is a most disgusting humiliation when so attacked".[173] He felt angry and bitter not so much at the personal humiliation as at the national humiliation involved in the assault on him.[174] He died on the morning of November 17, 1928.[175]

Captain Dhan Raj, his life-long associate, disclosed the feelings of Lajpat Rai after receiving injuries on October 30 when he observed in a press statement, "I requested him to take complete rest till he was alright again. He (Lalaji) said he preferred death to prolonged rest..."[176] Annie Besant's version also emphasised that the injuries had weakened him so much that Lalaji requested her to address the meeting at Delhi instead of him.[177] But the British Government refused to own any responsibility for the death of Lajpat Rai and the statement of Earl Winterton in the House of Commons was typical of the official attitude.[178] It did not care to apologise for the high-handedness of the police.[179]

Lajpat Rai's death plunged the Indian people and leaders into deep grief and sorrow. Lord Irwin, Viceroy of India, writing in a satiric vein, remarked, "I fancy we may expect much sympathy to be expressed with this patriotic victim of a brutal police".[180] A number of condolence meetings were held all over the country. Hartals were observed by students, tradesmen, other citizens and municipal offices alike. The Sikhs, Hindus, Parsis, Muslims and Anglo-Indians seemed anxious to join the procession. The funeral procession of Lala Lajpat Rai "could have been nothing less than a mile and a half in length comprising more than thirty thousand of people".[181] There was deep grief at the loss of Lalaji, a deep sense of indignation and a widespread feeling that Lajpat Rai never recovered from the shock to his system which the police assault on October 30 had caused.[182]

Publication of the Boyd Enquiry Report on December 2, 1928 failed to restore people's confidence in the fairness of th Punjab Government which had ignored the demand for non-official enquiry asked by Sheikh Muhammed Alam in the Punjab Legislative Council.[183] The departmental as well as Boyd Enquiry Report had white-washed the conduct of all the police officials and exonerated them,[184] but every Indian especially the politically-conscious leaders of the Punjab charged the Punjab Government with the murder of Lajpat Rai and the merciless lathi charge of the peaceful crowd. Mahatma Gandhi's remarks, in his letter to C.F. Andrews, dated November 29, 1928, represented the general feeling of Indians. "My own opinion is that the physical injury was not serious, though having been received in the region of the heart, it might have proved fatal. And the injuries would have been very serious had it not been for the intervention of friends who surrounded him bravely and received the blows themselves. But there is no doubt that Lalaji received a nervous shock from which he never completely recovered... Government's indifference and elaborate statement summarily dismissing Lalaji's challenge, ignoring even Lalaji's name added fuel to the fire ranging in his breast. He did not feel so much the personal wrong as the wrong done through him to the whole nation... The prostration of the people made the insult all the more galling".[185]

As forecast by Lajpat Rai in his speech of October 30, 1928, a violent revolutionary movement sprang in the Punjab. It gave a definite direction to the activities of militant nationalists in the Punjab. His demise intensified political awakening, sharpened a sense of national humiliation and strengthened the cry for independence. The young revolutionaries with their heightened sensibilities, felt crippled not only by intense grief but also by intense indignation and a desire to avenge the murder of Lajpat Rai. John Poyntz Saunders, an Assistant Superintendent of Police, met a violent death at the hands of a young revolutionary, Bhagat Singh[186] who became a popular hero in India. An organisation of the revolutionaries entitled "Hindustan Socialist Republican Army" took the responsibility of Saunders' murder. The proscribed leaflet read:

> The murder of a leader respected by millions of people at the unworthy hands of ordinary police

> official was an insult to the nation. It was the bounden duty of the young men of India to efface it.
>
> Today the world had seen that the Indian people are ever watchful of the interests of their country and no act is too great for them to defend its honour. We regret to have had to kill a person, but he was part and parcel of that inhuman and unjust order which has to be destroyed. In him an agent of British rule has been done away with. Shedding of human blood grieves us but blood shed at the alter of revolution is unavoidable. Our objective is to work for a revolution which would end exploitation of man by man.[187]

The popularity of Bhagat Singh, as pointed out by Jawaharlal Nehru was not due to his act of terrorism, "but because he seemed to vindicate, for the moment the honour of Lala Lajpat Rai, and through him of the nation".[188] Tributes to Lajpat Rai were paid by numerous leaders from India and abroad.[189]

Lajpat Rai's death aroused angry indignation against the bureaucracy and the police in the Punjab Legislative Council. The agitated members in the Council, in a resolution on November 30, 1928, demanded the appointment of a Committee of non-official members of the Council to enquire into the conduct of the officials who were responsible for the death of Lajpat Rai, the Sher-i-Punjab. Pt Nanak Chand said that the Government report "conclusively proves that the police officers were guilty of oppression and tyranny and that their assault was wholly unprovoked and was absolutely unmerited".[190] Some members made a scathing criticism of police excesses and warned the Government, that in view of changed times, the people would no longer tolerate "high handed repression".[191] Dr. Gokul Chand Narang suggested that official members should not be permitted to vote on the resolution because they were an involved party. But despite forceful pleas by the nationalist members in favour of the resolution, it was rejected by the House. The official, non-official and loyalist groups once again joined hands to foil the attempts of the opposition members to get a non-official enquiry committee appointed for probing into the causes of the death of Lajpat Rai. In protest the nationalist members staged a walkout from the Council and absented themselves during Governor's address. They issued the following statement:

> We, the present members of the Nationalist Party of the Punjab Legislative Council and Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava who endorsed our views, consider that the action of the Panjab Government in not condemning the cowardly attack of the police on Lala Lajpat Rai and others on the day of arrival of the Simon Commission at Lahore and its subsequent behaviour even after the death of L.Lajpat Rai, the great patriot, is deserving of the strongest censure. It is, therefore, upto us to voice universal public feelings of indignation against this attitude of the Government in an emphatic manner as by absenting ourselves today on the occasion of address of His Excellency the Governor to the members of the Panjab Council. We will later take such further action as lies in our power to give expression to our views in this matter.[192]

The assault on Lajpat Rai on October 30th, 1928 has become a matter of fierce controversy. The officials denied that Lajpat Rai received any injury at the hands of the Police. According to one official report:

> The death of Lajpat Rai on November 18th (sic) 1928 was falsely alleged by the party (revolutionary party) to be the result of his having been beaten by the police during disturbances on the occasion of the arrival of the Simon Commission in Lahore some weeks earlier. This allegation was widely made at the time but in point of fact L.Lajpat Rai received no injury at the hands of the police.[193]

Boyd, the Commissioner of Rawalpindi Division, held an inquiry into the incident in which Lajpat Rai was injured. He gave his verdict thus:

> In the scuffle some blows and injuries were inevitable, but I think that the police acted with restraint and I doubt whether a crowd in Britain would be handled more gently than was that at the Lahore Railway Station.[194]

But the eye-witness accounts and the photographs prove beyond doubt that Lajpat Rai received injuries at the hands of the police. Lala Hansraj, an eye witness of the incident, said in the Legislative Assembly:

> I can say so with certainty for at the time I could see both the people and the police. We were there for quite 15 minutes, when Mr. Scott came through the opening and, without any explanation, gave Lala (Lajpat Rai) two hard blows with the stick. I was standing next to Lalaji.[195]

Another eye witness of the police attack, Madan Mohan Malaviya said:

> I saw him (Lajpat Rai) a few minutes after the attack, and I am sorry to say I saw him three times after that, but I never saw him happy. It seemed that the effect and the shame of the attack had gone down deep into his heart.[196]

Dr. Sheikh Mohammad Alam, M.L.C., who was an eye witness to the beating, gave a detailed account of the entire episode in the Council. He said that medical report also showed that those injuries were "responsible for accelerating the death of Lajpat Rai". According to him Lajpat Rai himself told Diwan Chamanlal that he had been singled out for the attack. The account given by Dr. Alam was corroborated by Raizada Hansraj, A.M.stow, Gopi Chand Bhargava, and Mir Maqbool Mahmood.

Lajpat Rai's original photograph, a very reliable and important source now available,[197] clearly indicates that he received two injuries which caused bleeding. Boyd Inquiry Commission also accepted that force was used which resulted in "blows and injuries" on October 30, 1928 at the Lahore railway station. The Tribune published the very next day, "Lajpat Rai got two blows on chest".[198] On an inquiry from Motilal Nehru, Lajpat Rai informed him telegraphically on October 31 about the incident as follows:

> MANY THANKS FOR TELEGRAM DELIVERED LAST NIGHT INJURIES PAINFUL BUT NOT SERIOUS SATYAPAL HANS RAJ ALSO STILL SUFFERING.[199]

In the face of this evidence the official version is blatantly untrue. By openly confessing that the death of Lajpat Rai was caused by police lathi blows, the Government ran the risk of inviting greater outburst of public indignation.

What was the effect of blows on Lajpat Rai? How far other factors were responsible for his death? The doctors atteding on him were of the opinion that the police attack hastened his death. The general impression in the country was that injuries had caused the death of the leader and that the police had deliberately murdered Lajpat Rai. According to Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava, an eye witness of the incident, Lajpat Rai's "injuries were the direct cause of collapse of his heart".[200] According to Jawaharlal Nehru "there can be no doubt that the mental shock which accompanied the physical injuries had a tremendous effect on Lajpat Rai".[201] Subhash Chandra Bose writes: "Simon Commission was indirectly responsible for his death".[202] It is difficult to reach on any definite conclusion as to the effect of injuries without studying other factors.

Dr. N.R.Dharmavir, a well known Medical Officer, frequently attended Rai whenever he needed medical attention since 1922. About the history of Rai's health he writes: "His chief trouble was insomnia which was due to worry, mental work, etc. During his incarceration in 1922-23 he suffered from intermittent fever lasting for some months. When he came to England in 1924, he had developed pleurisy of a chronic nature".[203] He complained to Huebsch in June 1924 that "lower part of my liver continue to be congested".[204] In August 1925, he suffered from the 'attack of fever and jaundice".[205] In 1926 he had abdominal pains at irregular intervals for some time, which were said to be due to gall bladder trouble. In 1927, he was again in England and signs were found of old infective trouble on the right side of the chest. The "Graham's Test" indicated that the gall bladder was not functioning normally. The Radiologist concluded by saying that the condition of his teeth was at the bottom of all his symptoms and that they should be attended to as soon as possible".[206] On July 20, 1927 he himself wrote to Lala Achint Ram from London:

"I have spent a lot of money on Doctors and X-ray examination with practically no result. The X-ray men told me that all my organs were in normal condition except that the gall bladder did not function and that was not serious. The doctors here examined me and said everything was all right except that the liver was slightly enlarged".[207] Dr. Dharmvira opined that "although from time to time Lalaji suffered from attacks of insomnia and nervous exhaustion due to intellectual and mental work and sometimes contracted cold while travelling, on the whole his health was excellent until the day when he was struck at the Railway Station. On the 16th instant when I saw him later, his exhaustion had developed into aching all over together with some neuritic pain on the right side of the chest, and near the spine; the beats were normal and the temperature was normal but the respiration was slightly more rapid than usual (21 per minute) and the tongue was furred".[208] It appears from the history of his health that he was not perfect in health after his release from jail in 1923.

The family records reveal that Lajpat Rai was sad and unhappy at the old age with his family life particularly with Amrit Rai, younger son, who had developed the habit of 'intoxication and extravagance'.[209] It was intolerable for a deciplined man. In a letter to his elder son Pyarelal in the end of 1927 Lajpat Rai expressed his unhappiness and anguish towards family members thus:

> I am now of firm opinion that it is impossible to arrive at settlement with Amrit Rai, and it is better to terminate this partership with him, although I am also of the opinion that you are not wholly blameless in creating this situation. I am aware of the fact that your mother has given considerable part of my money to Amrit Rai. You also have, ever since my return from the United States of America, tried to pay off your debts out of my money. Intentionally, I have not taken notice of these things for I do not wish to create unpleasantness and conflict in my family. You all are running after your interests. I regard myself as a very unfortunate person and lament the spirit of my family for days and hours. I wish I had

> never married and had no child... I am determined to cut off connections with you all... It is surprising that you all have, without of course deserving, got good wives.[210]

Before his death Lajpat Rai gave a Will against younger son Amrit Rai. It further precipitated family conflict.[211] Lajpat Rai's unhappiness can also be concluded from his long letter dated July 12, 1928 to his trusted friend Ghanshyam Das Birla written in a mood of religious scepticism and despondency. He wrote: "I am sick of life-both mentally and physically. I suppose the one leads to the other. I have no zest left in me, no go, no desire".[212] We can safely conclude that diseases of chronic nature, unhappy family life, strenuous round of speaking and working and assault at a time when he was far gone in years were responsible for Lala Lajpat Rai's death.

Notes and References

1. A.I.C.C.Papers, File No.3/1923. See also the Indian Annual Register, 1923, Vol. VI, p. 143.
2. Ibid., p. 221.
3. Report of the Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee, 1922 (Madras, 1922), p. 90.
4. Letter, Lajpat Rai to C.R.Das, published in The People, April 13, 1929.
5. The Tribune (Lahore), September 23, 1923.
6. Ibid.
7. Telegram, September 6, 1923, Motilal Nehru to Lajpat Rai, Motilal Nehru Papers.
8. Bamford, B.C., Non-Cooperation and Khilafat Movements (Delhi, 1925), p. 90.
9. Ibid.

10. Ruchi Ram Sahni disclosed that the Punjab Congress Committee in a resolution had requested A.I.C.C. to either suspend the Council boycott resolution or permit the province to decide, in case they regarded it necessary to suspend that resolution.

11. The Tribune, October 25, 1923.

12. Ibid., October 4, 1923.

13. Ibid., October 5, 1923.

14. Ibid., November 22, 1923.

15. The winning candidates were Nihal Chand Sikri, Mohanlal Bhatnagar, Diwan Chand, Dr. Dhan Raj Bhasin, Gokul Chand Narang, Bodh Raj and Prof. R.R.Sahni. See The Tribune, December 8, 1923.

16. Punjab Legislative Council, Vol. VI, October 7, 1923.

17. Administrative Report of the Punjab for the year 1923-24, para 4, p. 2.

18. The Tribune, December 8, 1923.

19. Sidney Webb, later transformed into Lord Passfield, had joined the Cabinet, but Beatrice declined to be known as Lady Passfield.

20. Quoted in Feroz Chand, Lajpat Rai: Life and Work (New Delhi, 1978), p. 439.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. Telegram, May 8, 1924, Lajpat Rai to Gandhi, Gandhi Papers.

24. Telegram, undated, Gandhi to Lajpat Rai, Ibid.

25. Letter, June 2, 1924, Lajpat Rai to Huebsch, Huebsch Papers.

26. Feroz Chand, op. cit., p. 445.

27. Sitaramayya, History of the Indian National Congress Vol. I 1946-47 (Bombay), pp. 249, 277, 288-89.

28. Feroz Chand, op. cit., p. 422.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Letter, July 22, 1925, Lajpat Rai to M.R.Jayakar, Jayakar Papers.

33. Letter, July 28, 1925, M.R.Jayakar to Lajpat Rai, Ibid.

34. Letter, August 3, 1925, Lajpat Rai to Jayakar, Ibid.

35. Quoted in G.D.Birla, In the Shadow of the Mahatma (Calcutta, 1953), p. 35.

36. Letter, January 20, 1926, Lajpat Rai to Motilal Nehru vide Indian Annual Register, Vol. I, 1926.

37. The Indian Quarterly Register, July-December 1925, Vol. II, p. 55.

38. Letter, November 15, 1925, M.R.Jayakar to Lajpat Rai, Jayakar Papers.

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. The Indian Quarterly Register, July-December, 1925, Vol. II, p. 56.

42. Feroz Chand, op. cit., p. 460.

43. Ibid., pp. 462-463.

44. The People, March 14, 1926.

45. In Bombay, a couple of days before his scheduled departure, Lajpat Rai received a telegraphic message from the deposed Maharaja of Nabha, Ripu Daman Singh, then living at Dehra Dun, and the telegram was followed by a special messenger. The deposed Maharaja was not in the Government's good books, largely (at least partly) because he was suspected to be not as loyal to the rulers as he was expected. The Maharaja received sympathy from many Nationalist leaders. He was at that time seeking redress from the India Office by having his case represented mainly with the help of his solicitors in London. He sought help of Lajpat Rai. Lalaji made it clear to the Maharaja's emissary that as a public man he did not feel interested in this kind of errand, but that if Maharaja wanted to engage his services as a lawyers, he could accept the brief. Maharaja accepted the condition.

46. Feroz Chand, Ibid., p. 470.

47. The People, June 27, 1926.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid.

52. V.C.Joshi (ed.), Lala Lajpat Rai: Writing and Speeches, Vol. II (New Delhi, 1966), pp. 312-15.

53. Beatrice Webb, Typescript Diaries, June 28, 1926, Passfield Papers.

54. People, August 8, 1926.

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid.

57. People, August 8, 1926.

58. The Tribune, September 5, 1926.

59. Ibid.

60. The People, September 12, 1926.

61. Ibid.

62. "Lajpat Rai's resignation", letter to Motilal Nehru, published in The People, August 29, 1926.

63. Ibid.

64. Indian Annual Register, Vol. I, 1926, p. 405. See also The Tribune, August 29, 1926.

65. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 51.

66. Letter, August 29, 1926, Motilal Nehru to Lajpat Rai, Motilal Nehru Papers.

67. Ibid.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid.

70. Letter, September 1, 1926, Lajpat Rai to Motilal Nehru, ibid.

71. Letter, August 29, 1926, Motilal Nehru to Lajpat Rai, Ibid.

72. Ibid.

73. Letter, September 1, 1926, Lajpat Rai to Motilal Nehru, Ibid.

74. Ibid.

75. Ibid.

76. The Tribune, September 6, 1926.

77. Letter, October 8, 1926, Col. Wedgwood, M.P; to Lajpat Rai, J.C.Wedgwood Papers.

78. Letter, undated, Satyapal to the President of the A.I.C.C. vide A.I.C.C. File No. 52(ii), 1926.

79. Ibid.

80. Collected Works of Gandhi, Vol. XXXIV, p. 390.

81. Letter, November 4, 1926, Satyapal to Motilal Nehru vide A.I.C.C. File No.G52/111, 1926.

82. Telegram November 2, 1926, P.K.Malaviya to Jayakar Jayakar Papers.

83. Feroz Chand, op. cit., p. 528.

84. Ibid.

85. Letter, October 14, 1926, Lajpat Rai to Malaviya, Quoted in Ibid., pp. 530-38.

86. Letter, January 14, 1927, Lajpat Rai to Gandhi, Gandhi Papers.

87. Ibid.

88. Oral interview with Gokul Chand Narang, Transcript (N.M.M.L.), p. 15.

89. The People, December 12, 1926.

90. Ibid.

91. A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 49.

92. Ibid.

93. Ibid.

94. Mahadev Desai, Day to Day With Gandhi: Secretary's Diary (Varanasi, 1974), p. 25.

95. Ibid.

96. Telegram, December 24, 1926, *Gandhi Papers*.

97. *The People*, January 2, 1927.

98. *Ibid*.

99. Quoted in Feroz Chand, *op. cit*., p. 534.

100. Letter, June 2, 1927, Lajpat Rai to Jayakar, *Jayakar Papers*.

101. Letter, July 20, 1927, Lajpat Rai to Achint Ram, *Achint Ram Papers*.

102. Letter, June 2, 1927, Lajpat Rai to Jayakar, *Jayakar Papers*.

103. Feroz Chand, *op. cit*., p. 535.

104. *The People*, November 17, 1927.

105. *The Times of India*, November 22, 1927.

106. *The Tribune* (Lahore), November 18, 1927.

107. *The People*, November 1928; also see *Lajpat Rai and Relevance of His Ideas Today* (Chandigarh, 1972).

108. *Ibid*.

109. *The Legislative Assembly Debates* (Official Report), Vol. I 1928, pp. 382-91.

110. *Ibid*.

111. *Home Department, G.O.I.* (Public), File No. 112, 1928.

112. *The Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. I, 1928, pp. 382-83.

113. *Ibid*., p. 442.

114. *Leader*, February 15, 1928.

115. All Parties Conference 1928: Report of the Committee appointed by the Conference to determine the principles of the Constitution for India (Allahabad, 1928), p. 20.

116. Letter, June 27, 1928, Motilal Nehru to Gandhi, Motilal Papers.

117. Letter, July 20, 1928, Motilal Nehru to the Members, All Parties Conference Committee, Ansari Papers.

118. All Parties Conference, pp. 43-44.

119. Ibid; p. 58.

120. Chakravarti and C.Bhattacharya, Congress in Evolution, p. 27.

121. Hindustan Times, August 15, 17, 1928.

122. Jayakar welcomed the report because its recommendations were 'more beneficial to the Hindus than any scheme so far suggested on the congress side', Jayakar to Kelkar, August 28, 1928, Jayakar Papers.

123. The districts included in the overwhelmingly Muslim zone were 'Gujrat (86%), Shahpur (82.8%), Jhelum (99.7%), Rawalpindi (82.6%), Attock (90.9%), Mianwali(86.3%), Montgomery (71.8%), Lyallpur (60.8%), Jhang (83.3%), Multan (82.2%), Muzaffargarh (86.8%), Dera Ghazi Khan (88.3%), Sialkot (61.9%), Gujranwala (71.9%), Sheikhupura (63.3%). The figures given in brackets are ratios to the total population.

124. All Parties Conference, pp. 44-45.

125. Tribune, August 17, 1928.

126. Ibid., August 21, 28, 1928.

127. Indian Quarterly Register, 1928, Vol. II, p. 437.

128. Ibid., p. 436.

129. Ibid.

130. The People, August 23, 1928.

131. Ibid., October 11, 1928.

132. Ibid., October 11, 1928.

133. Ibid.

134. The Nehru Report was discussed all through 1928 and generally approved by the Working Committee of the Congress, but not formally adopted by the Congres itself. Its recommendation that India should have Dominion Status was the main point of the left-wing nationalist attack led by Jawaharlal Nehru who insisted upon the adoption of complete independence as the goal.

135. The Tribune, August 24, 1928.

136. The People, August 23, 1928.

137. Home Department (Poll), F.No.I, April, 1928.

138. The Tribune, October 3, 1928 - Proceedings of the Punjab Political Conference held at Lyallpur and also the editorial "The Lyallpur Conference". See also its issue, October 2, 1928.

139. Letter, October 5, 1928, Lajpat Rai to Motilal Nehru, vide A.I.C.C.F. No.108/1928(Supplementary).

140. Ibid.

141. Letter, October 5, 1928, Ibid.

142. Letter, October 2, 1928, Lajpat Rai to Motilal Nehru, A.I.C.C. Suppl., F.No.108/1928.

143. The Tribune, October 13, 1928. The deputation of the All Parties Boycott Committee consisted of Lajpat Rai, Sardar Mangal Singh, Dr. Kitchlew, Sheikh Siraj-ud-din Paracha and others.

144. The Tribune, October 13, 1928. Regarding the proceedings of the meetings at Jullundur The Tribune observed that Lajpat Rai, Mangal Singh, Dr. Kitchlew and Sheikh Siraj-ud-din pointed out that issue of reservation of seats for Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims should not be pressed and recommendations of the Nehru Report were in their best interests. Resolutions were passed unanimously accepting the principles of the Nehru Report and boycott of the Simon Commission.

145. A meeting was held on October 12 at Ludhiana under the Presidentship of Maulana Abdulla, Advocate and Municipal Commissioner to popularise the Nehru Report - The Tribune October 14, 1928.

146. The Tribune, October 20, 1928.

147. Ibid.

148. Pattabhai Sitarammayya, The History of the Indian National Congress 1885-1935, Vol. I (Bombay, 1946), pp. 318-19.

149. Letter, October 17, 1928, Lajpat Rai to Motilal Nehru, vide A.I.C.C., File No.108/1928 (Supplementary).

150. Other vernacular newspapers were The Tej (Lahore) The Nava Kal The Siyasat (Lahore).

151. Letter, October 2, 1928, Lajpat Rai to Motilal Nehru, vide A.I.C.C. Suppl, No. 108/1928.

152. Letter, October 5, 1928, Lajpat Rai to Motilal Nehru, Ibid.

153. Letter, October 14, 1928, Hardikar to Lajpat Rai, Hardikar Papers.

154. Letter, October 18, 1928, Jayakar to Lajpat Rai, Jayakar Papers.

155. The People, November 1, 1928.

156. The People, November 1, 1928.

157. Letter, October 2, 1928, Lajpat Rai to Motilal Nehru, vide A.I.C.C., File No. 108/1928 (Suppl.).

158. The Tribune, November 1, 1928. See also its issues dated October 31, and November 2, 1928.

159. The Tribune, November 2, 1928. According to press report, Lajpat Rai informed the mammoth gathering at Lahore on October 30, 1928 that he had initially no intention to join the demonstration but he had promised to preside over that meeting when he left Lahore for Ettawa. On his return Mohammad Alam informed him on telephone that the orders under section 144 had been promulgated and they wanted his cooperation. To quote Lalaji"... when I had my differences with Congress men in Lahore in 1926, I told them whatever my differences may be with them if they wanted me to lead the movement which involved risk or danger to my person or life, they would always find me in the forefront. I think I have kept my promise".

160. Punjab Legislative Council Debates, Vol. 11, No.5, 1928, pp. 323-24. Evidence of K.L.Jolly was quoted in Sheikh Mohammed Alam's speech which he made in his reply to the Punjab Council Debate demanding a non-official enquiry into the barricade incident.

161. The Tribune, November 2, 1928.

162. Ibid.

163. Ibid., November 1, 1928.

164. Ibid., November 2, 1928.

165. Ibid., November 2, 1928.

166. The Tribune, November 2, 1928.

167. The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. XXXVIII (Ahmadabad, 1970,)p. 30.

168. The Tribune, November 3, 1928 - Press Statement of Lajpat Rai.

169. Ibid., November 30, 1928 - Interview of the Tribune representative with Sir Mohammed Shafi and Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan, M.L.A., Central Committee and leader of the Muslim party in the Assembly.

170. Ibid., November 6, 1928.

171. Ibid., November 10, 1928 - Press Statement of Lajpat Rai.

172. The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. XXXVIII, p. 53. In an article entitled "As ever", Gandhi deplored the Punjab Govt.'s old policy of excusing the police and military, no matter how they act..."

173. Lajpat Rai: Writings and Speeches, p. LXIII.

174. Jawaharlal Nehru, An Autobiography (London, 1936), p. 174.

175. Jyotish Chandra Ghosal writes about Lajpat Rai's death thus: 'Ever since the beating he received on the day of the arrival of the Simon Commission, said Lalaji's son and his two family doctors, "Lalaji has been feeling weak and was complaining of exhaustion. There were no signs of any organic or functional disease in the heart. Signs of exhaustion have been more pronounced. Lalaji felt uneasy very often and weaker than he used to feel before". His old afflition pleurisy was in evidence. However, Lalaji had been feeling tolerably well till the night of the 16th November. That day at night his grandson, Bharat Bhushan was messaging him. But he felt that he could not go to sleep if the message was continued. So Bharat Bhushan left him at 1.30 A.M. Lalaji passed an uneasy night. About 6.30 A.M. he sat up in bed and said he was feeling pain. He then lay down and his breathing became hard. Bharat Bhushan sent to call Lalaji's son who was in the next room but as soon as they both came back, they found that

his breathing had stopped. Thus, on November 17, 1928 at 7.30 A.M. passed away the noble soul to have entered peace at the blessed feet of the Almighty father.' Jyotish Chandra Ghosal, Life of Lajpat Rai (Calcutta, 1928), pp. 34-35.

176. The Tribune, November 22, 1928. Captain Dhan Raj, M.B.B.S., who knew Lalaji from his childhood, had been associated with the latter in various capacities, public and private.

177. Ibid.

178. Parliamentary Debate: House of Commons, Vol. 223, No. 15, 1928.

179. Ibid.

180. Letter, November 18, 1928, Lord Irwin to Malcolm Seton, K.C.B., Halifax Papers.

181. The Tribune, November 19, 1928.

182. Ibid.

183. Parliamentary Debates: House of Commons, Vol. 223, No. 15. Session 5 of 1928. Statement of Earl Winterton in the House of Commons on November 26, 1928. It revealed that both the enquiries were intended to save the police officials from public criticism. He cautioned that the general effect of both enquiries (departmental and public) was to establish the fact that while the police were compelled to resort to some force owing to the pressure of the crowd from the rear and consequently caused slight injury to persons in the front ranks among whom was Lajpat Rai. There was no deliberate or unprovoked assault.

184. The Tribune, December 2, 1928, Text of the Boyd Enquiry Report.

185. The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. XXXVIII, pp. 121-2.

186. Bhagat Singh and his associates wanted to kill J.A.Scott, Senior Superintendent of Police who was chiefly responsible for the first attack on Lajpat Rai. The People, November, 1928.

187. Quoted in Gopal Thakur's Bhagat Singh: The man and His Ideas (New Delhi, 1965), pp. 9-10.

188. Jawaharlal Nehru, An Autobiography (London, 1947), p. 175.

189. Writing in Young India, Gandhi said, "Men like Lalaji cannot die so long as the Sun shines in the Indian sky". Ghosal, Jyotish Chandra, Life of Lajpat Rai (Calcutta, 1928), p. 42.

Motilal Nehru said: "By the sudden death of Lala Lajpat Rai at this critical struggle I have lost the invaluable assistance of a great colleague and the country of the devoted services of a selfless patriot". Ibid.

M.A.Jinnah wrote: "He was undoubtedly a great figure in the political world of India, and whether one could always see eye to eye with him or not he was an earnest and sincere worker", Ibid., p. 43.

Subhas Chandra Bose wrote: "... with the death of Lala Lajpat Rai passes away, one of the foremost champions of Indians Nationalism", Ibid.

Dr. S.J.T.Sunderland, his American friend said: "Lajpat Rai was a great man. He would have been regarded as great if he had been born in and lived his life in England, America or any other country. He was more great in more directions than one, for he was many sided man. It may almost be said that he was three or four or five men in one. He had travelled, observed and studied in many countries - in Europe, Asia and America". The People, January 3,10, 1929.

190. Punjab Legislative Council, Vol. XII, 1928-19, p. 303.

191. Ibid., p. 317.

192. Panjab Legislative Council, Vol. XII, 1928-29, pp. 181-83.

193. Ewart, J.M.(Compiled) Terrorism in India, 1917-1936, (Simla, 1937), p. 74.

194. The Tribune, December 2, 1928.

195. Legislative Assembly Debates (Official Report), Vol. I, 1929, p. 944.

196. Ibid., p. 839.

197. "Lala Lajpat Rai with Lathi blows 30th October, 1928". Photograph available in the Panjab University Library, Chandigarh.

198. The Tribune (Lahore), November 1, 1928.

199. Telegram, October 31, 1928, Lajpat Rai to Motilal Nehru, vide A.I.C.C., File No. 108/1928. Lajpat Rai's clothes (Kurta and Pyjama) which he wore on the day of incident and having blood strains are still preserved by the Servants of the People Society, New Delhi.

200. Jyotish Chandra Ghosal, Life of Lajpat Rai (Calcutta, 1928), p. 46.

201. Jawaharlal Nehru, An Autobiography (London, 1947), p. 84.

202. Subhash Chandra Bose, The Indian Struggle 1920-42 (Calcutta, 1948), p. 209.

203. The People, November 22, 1928.

204. Letter, June 2, 1924, Lajpat Rai to Huebsch, Huebsch Papers.

205. Letter, August 3, 1925, Lajpat Rai to Jayakar, M.R.Jayakar Papers.

206. The People, November 22, 1928.

207. Letter, July 20, 1927, Lajpat Rai to Achint Ram, Achint Ram Papers.

208. The People, November 22, 1926.

209. My interview with Vikram Dev, grandson of Lajpat Rai (Pyarelal's son), on July 19, 1985.

210. Letter, 1927, Lajpat Rai to Pyarelal, Pyarelal Papers.

211. My interview with Vikram Dev, grandson of Lajpat Rai (Pyarelal son) on July 19, 1985.

212. Letter, July 12, 1928, Lajpat Rai to Ghanshyam Das Birla, Ghanshyam Das Birla Papers.

Chapter 7

LAJPAT RAI AND COMMUNAL POLITICS IN INDIA

The communal problem which became more complex and explosive during 1923-28 engaged Lajpat Rai's serious attention. His views on communal problem and his attitude towards the Muslims are a subject of keen controversy, he has been attacked both by the nationalists and the communalists for being a 'communal nationalist'. Modern Pakistani historian have criticised his Indian nationalism on account of his long association with 'Hindu Movements', 'staunch Hindu leaders' and frequent use of Hindu symbols, idioms, and myths in his political speeches and writings. In their writings they have also accused him that he was not 'static' and 'consistent' in his views. An attempt is made in the present chapter to study his views on communal problem particularly in the Punjab after 1922 and the solutions that he suggested for solving this burning question of the day.

Was Lajpat Rai a communal nationalist or liberal communal nationalist or extreme communalist before and after 1922? Before we put him in any particular category it would be appropriate to understand the meaning of the three. According to a well known modern historian, communal nationalism was, properly speaking, not communalism at all. It operated within the broad framework of nationalism, and was more in the nature of a deviation from, or weakness of, nationalism. In this form, nationalism remained primary. The communal nationalist accepted the basic notions of community and special communal interests but believed in the possibility as well as the desirability of their integration into the broader nation and national interests. He believed and propagated that even when the interests of the different religious communities were different, they did not clash and that it was only within the developing nationalism that the different communal interests could be protected. He also believed that his belonging to a particular religious community should not be, at least ideally, a relevant factor in his politics.[1] For example, in his nationalist phase before 1920, when he at the same time worked in the Muslim League, M.A.Jinnah asked Indian people to separate politics from religion and to imbibe secularism. He refuted the Muslim communalists's assumption that self-government in India would lead to Hindu rule. While not actively supporting or opposing separate electroates, he said that the real issue was Home Rule or "transfer of power from bureaucracy to democracy".[2]

The liberal communalist was basically a believer in and a practitioner of communal politics; but he still upheld certain liberal, democratic, humanist and nationalist values. He recognized that ultimately India must be seen and built as a nation. He argued that India consisted of distinct religion-based communities which had their own separate and special interests which they did not share with each other and which often came into mutual conflict. But he also believed that these interests could gradually be accommodated and brought into harmony within the overall, developing national interests, some of which were common even at the outset. He accepted that the ultimate destiny of Indian politics was the merger of the different communities into a single nation, whatever might be the degree of present communal competition and conflict. Thus, the liberal communalist demanded separate communal rights, safeguards, weightage and reservations in jobs and legislatures, separate electorates, etc., within the broad concept of one Indian nation-in-the-making. He accepted national unity as the ultimate goal as also the concept of the ultimate common interests of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians. It is to be noted that even though expressing and encouraging communalism, none of the liberal communal demands posed a direct threat to Indian unity. All liberal communalist assumed the possibility of the removal of communal fears and conflicts once conditions were provided for the protection of the 'legitimate interests of the communities', and seldom preached all-out hostility against the other community, and mainly emphasised the fight for special rights for his own community. In time, he also tended to accept the wider principle of democracy, and anti-colonialism, once communal interests were seen as guaranteed. In fact, during the 1920's, the liberal communalists attended each other's annual sessions and conferences. From the historian's point of view, liberal communalism had another important feature. It retained elements of rationality and its content programme, ideology, etc., could therefore, be often analyzed from its self-expression. The Ali Brothers, Mohammed Ali and Shaukat Ali, M.A. Jinnah between 1924 and 1937, Madan Mohan Malaviya, especially after 1922, N.C.Kelkar and M.R. Jayakar of the 1920's were on the whole examples of liberal communalist. The Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha till the late 1920's in the main practised liberal communalism. Both claimed to be fighting for the legitimate rights of Muslims and Hindus, respectively, but otherwise stood for Hindu-Muslim unity and the formation of an Indian nation and an Indian State.[3]

The third form is extreme communalism. Extreme communalism, or communalism working broadly within the fascist syndrome, was irrational and based on fear and hatred, and had a tendency to use violence or terror as a weapon against political opponents. We do not find examples of such form in 1920's. The basic change from liberal communalism to extreme communalism occured during 1937-38 when both Hindu and Muslim communalism, in the form of the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, started becoming fascist and irrational in their ideology and politics.[4]

Lajpat Rai started his public life as a staunch Nationalist - strongly believing that the Hindus and the Muslims should join hand in their struggle for independence against the alien rulers. His speeches and writings amply demonstrate his conviction in

Hindu-Muslim unity for political purposes. In 1889 at the fifth Indian National Congress speaking on the question of representation in the legislatures, he said that he was quite content to be represented by any good Mohammadan or Sikh member.[5]

In his article entitled, "A Study of Hindu Nationalism", he contended that it was wrong to suppose that nationalism required the complete fusion of religious, social, economical and political action and argued that differences and controversial discussions were absolutely necessary for the healthy growth of nationalism provided one unifying ideal overruled minor difference. He further argued that all Indians should share the feelings of nationalism as the one ideal which would be sufficiently broad and extensive to include all who took pride in one common name, common ancestry, common history, common religion, common language and common future.[6] If this was lacking, Lajpat Rai argued, it was still sufficient for the growth of Indian nationalisms if all Indians, irrespectives of their differences, would at least share a sense of unity in struggling together against a common enemy. In the same article he warned that if the Congress decided to preserve an attitude of inaction in social, religious and political matters, it would result not only in the weakening of Indian nationalism, but in stagnation and the gradual extinction of Indians as a distinct nation. He concluded by asserting that the social and political improvement of Indians involved a struggle amongst themselves as well as against others.[7]

After passing the Swadeshi resolution at Calcutta Congress in 1906, he made many speecehes in which he expressed the importance of unity among all communities in the interest of the country.[8]

Lajpat Rai was of the opinion that religious differences should not come in the way for the Muslims to institute separate political objectives. Addressing the Punjab Political Conference in October 1906, Lajpat Rai said, "It is my firm conviction that Hindus shall never cease to be Hindus and Mohammedans shall never cease to be Mohammedans. Their religious ideas are so different that it is impossible to expect a complete social union of them in the near future. But that is no reason why they cannot make common cause in political work..".[9] On March 26, 1907, he addressed a meeting at Allahabad in which he said that Mohammedans were afraid that being in a minority, after the attainment of Swaraj, they would suffer at the hands of Hindus. He tried to remove this ideas from the minds of Muslims and said, "They must remember that when a representative government is formed, steps are taken to secure the rights of minorities".[10] He also advised them and their Hindu brothers to stand upon their feet and not upon the Englishmen. He concluded by asserting that when they would be united in the interest of the country, no force in the world would be able to separate them from each other.[11] In a speech before the Surat Swadeshi Conference in December 1907, he said that he did not believe "that the idea of Hindu and Mohammedan unity is only a phantom... I, on my part, decline to give away to pessimism. Mine is a religion of hope and faith."[12]

When the Indian Councils Act of 1909 introduced separate electroates, Lajpat Rai bitterly condemned it. He felt it would permanently divide the country into two hostile camps, Hindu and Muslim.[13] He picked up the issue of separate electorate with great enthusiasm. He strongly opposed the Government of India's decision to accord special status to the Muslims and declared it as an unjust, irrational, and injurious step for the healthy relationship between the two communities. He wrote against communal electorate in news papers like Tribune, Panjabee, India, Morning Leader, Times, etc. In a letter to the Times, London, he wrote: "I think it will be relevant to inquire on how many occasions within the last forty-seven years or so, since the Indian Council Act of 1861 came into force, the Legislative Councils of India had to deal with questions exclusively or specifically affecting the Muslims of India as distinguished from their non-Muslim countrymen. I do not wish to say one unkind word in reply to the argument based upon the so-called historical and political importance of the Mohammedans of India, a vast majority of whom are only descendants of the Hindu converts, and are as much divided into castes and sub-castes as the Hindus. But does the All-India Muslim League seriously think that backwardness in education, want of organisation, and want of enterprise are substantial grounds for claiming a larger representation than their numbers entitle them?"[14] While Lajpat Rai and others discussed the issue of separate electorate in broader terms, it was Lala Lal Chand and other Hindus who articulated the anger and frustration which the Hindu minority experienced in the Punjab.[15] The members of the Hindu Sabha called a meeting at Lahore on March 21, 1909 to protest against this injustice meted out by the Government to the "Important community of the Punjab".[16] On his return from England, Lajpat Rai noted discontent and frustration in India particularly in the Punjab. In his letter to Ramsey Macdonald, M.P., Lajpat Rai wrote, "The situation here is politically quiet. The Hindu-Mohammadan trouble is getting more and more acute. The people are developing a habit of studied hypocrisy... What is it likely to lead to nobody knows. The Mohammadans are of course jubliant. Among the Hindus there is a general sense of sullen helplessness".[17] Thus, Lajpat Rai held separate electroates responsible for trouble between the two major communities of India.

In a magazine called Zamana of February 1911, he dwelt at other causes of the rift between the two. These were: (1) the number of seats that each community wished to acquire on the local and the Imperial Councils; (2) Government posts; (3) Hindu-Urdu controversy; and (4) the propaganda of the Arya-Samaj.[18] As a remedy, Lajpat Rai suggested that the Hindus and Muslims on the Councils should strive to serve the masses rather than their own interests. He asked them to join forces in making education free and disseminate it among the ignorant people and the result would be that after a decade both the communities would be able to understand their common good and leave off fighting among themselves for petty favours. For the second cause, he said that the Hindu should make room for the Mohammedans in Government offices. As regards the language controversy, he said that "it is a pity that this subject is now being pressed too far. The Mohammedans want to make Urdu the national language of India and the Arabic alphabet as the universal character. The Hindus all over the country are also pressing the same claim of Hindi".[19] Lajpat Rai faced difficulty at that time to arrive at a mutual understanding; but so far as Upper India was concerned, he considered that Hindi ought to be the court language of the United Provinces where the Hindu population was about 90 per cent of the whole, while Urdu ought to continue as the court language in the Punjab, the North-West Frontier Provinces and Sindh where the Mohammedans were in majority. As regards the so called aggressive propaganda of the Arya Samaj, the Lala said that the charge was absolutely without any foundation. If the Mohammedans felt annoyed at the propaganda of the Arya Samaj the Hindus were also equally dissatisfied with the views of the Aligarh Party. He concluded by making an appeal to the leaders of both the communities to dissuade their people from carrying tales against each other to the officials, as such conduct was both shameful and degrading.

He was happy to witness friendly feelings between the two communities on his return to India in February 1920. In his first welcome speech at Bombay which was attended by different communities, Lajpat Rai expressed the importance of the Hindu-Muslīm unity thus:

> My friends, I must tell you that heanceforth we should recognise it as a fundamental doctrine that the unity of the Hindus and Mohammadans will be a great asset to our political future. In this unity we shall not be guided by the temporary benefit of this community or that. We shall not adopt it as a measure of political expediency. But we shall adopt it as a fundamental doctrine of our faith to stick to our death-beds until we win our friend. Not till then only, but thereafter too, we shall live in this country as brothers determined to work together, determined to resist together, and determined to win. That is one of the fundamental doctrines which we must adopt as a first article of our political faith.[20]

Lajpat Rai supported the Indian Muslims in their attempt to get the Khilafat wrongs redressed. He said, "English statesmen object to the interference of Indian Mohammadan in the affairs of the Turkish Empire. India should emphatically record a protest against that view. Turkey was defeated mainly by the Indian army for which India paid. That point alone gives every Indian, Hindu or Mohammadan or Buddhist, a right to be heard in the Turkish Settlement... The Turkish question is an Indian affair and must receive our best attention."[21] To strengthen the bonds of Hindu-Muslim unity in India on the question of Turkish problem he held that, "it was a national duty to focus and consolidate Indian opinion on the Turkish question and to press it on the British people for consideration".[22]

Lajpat Rai was present along with other Congress leaders when the All India Muslim League commenced its special session in Calcutta on September 7, 1920. Others prominent leaders were Annie Besant, Gandhi, Motilal Nehru, Hakim Azmal Khan, Shaukat Ali, Swami Shradhananda, Abul Kalam Azad, Rambhaj Dutt Chaudhari, Duni Chand, C.Vijaya Raghavachariyar, Lala Girdharilal, Dr. Kitchlew, Jamunadas Dwarkadas, etc.[23] It was the best example of Hindu-Muslim unity.

II

Views expressed by Lajpat Rai in Hindu conferences and his private correspondence with friends before 1922 also deserve careful investigation. He joined Arya Samaj and became its votary.[24] In fact, he received his lessons in India's glorious past, in the pristine glory of Hinduism, and in self-reliance, national pride and patriotism at the portals of the Arya Samaj.[25] He had tremendous faith in glory of the Vedas. But he was not in the grip of its orthodoxy. Even in the Arya Samaj, he did not subscribe to the orthodox Mahatma group.[26] Exposure to Western life and culture helped him to be more catholic in his outlook. He said that a Hindu basically remained a Hindu in his social and religious obligations, no matter whether he lived in the eastern or the western part of India. This early phase of Lajpat Rai's life was, thus, the natural concomitant of Hindu revivalism found in the Arya Samaj with which he was so intimately involved.[27]

At one time when the Arya Samaj was facing the danger of extinction, on the charges of sedition levelled by Valentine Chirol[28], Lajpat Rai came to its rescue with the argument, that Arya Samaj and its founder were not seditionists.[29] The real mission of the Arya Samaj was thoroughly nationalistic. He said that the principal work of the Samaj was not to oppose Christianity and Islam. Its real strength was in its constructive approach based on reforms and regeneration.[30] According to Lajpat Rai, the Arya Samaj aimed at radical changes in the thought and life of the people. It aimed at the formation of a new national character, on the fundamental basis of Vedic thought and Vedic life. It was essential for it to create dissatisfaction with the existing conditions in Hindu society, to create an ambition for better thought and better life - an ambition that was bound to bring about unrest.[31] In support of the Arya Samaj, he quoted C.F.Andrews as saying: "Today it is by far the most powerful indigenous reforming movement in the North India".[32] Andrew also writes: "The Arya Samaj has from the first "decidedly militant in spirit and policy" for the simple reason that it has two militant Churches to counteract, viz., Islam and Christianity'.[33]

In 1907-08, orthodox Arya Samajist opposed to Lajpat Rai's "political activity". They wanted that "no one acting beyond politics should be associated in the management of the Samaj and the College".[34] But Lajpat Rai argued that such development would be "deadly blow either to political work or to the Samaj and the college".[35] In disgust Lajpat Rai wrote to Gokhale on February 28, 1907: "You may be sorry to learn that I have practically retired from active Samajic life".[36] However, he continued to lead a group in the Arya Samaj. It is obvious from the good wishes which he sent on behalf of Arya Samaj to Ramsay Macdonald, British M.P. on Xmas in 1910: "Some Arya Samaj friends are sending in a separate parcel something as Xmas present in token of their gratefulness for your having spoken of them sympathetically in your book. I hope, you and Mrs. Macdonald will accept the same".[37] Even during his forced exile period in U.S.A., Lajpat Rai worked for Arya Samaj. In this connection he himself wrote in a private letter dated December 21, 1914 from New York to his friend:

"People here are interested in the Arya Samaj and I am trying my best to stimulate further interest".[38] He wrote a book entitled Arya Samaj in 1914.

Hindu religious scriptures were a source of inspiration and courage to many of Indian leaders. It is not an accident that many of them made their own commentaries on Bhagavad Gita. Like Tilak, Lajpat Rai also wrote a short book entitled The Message of the Bhagavad Gita.[39] The importance of the book published in 1908 lies not so much in its content - the author does not say anything new - but in the fact that here is another instance of a leader trying to find solace in religious scripture when he is facing hardships owing to his political convictions and in the fact that he tries to instil courage in others by appealing to an ancient Hindu religious text. The Gita was seen by him as the remedy of all ills at all times. The universal acceptability of the Gita was due to its attempt to reconcile apparent contradictions of life.[40] He added it to the Arya Samaj canon to appeal to the wider Hindu audience. Glorification of Shivaji, Maharana Pratap and Guru Gobind Singh was undertaken to project them as the heroes who did not submit to 'Muslim' supremacy.[41] To awaken Hindus to a sense of history, he wrote biographies of Sri Krishna, Dayanand, Ashoka and Shivaji. Ashoka was seen by him as the greatest emperor.[42] Thus, the Buddhist heritage was claimed as a part of the Hindu fold.

Lajpat Rai also tried to introduce the cult of Shivaji in the Punjab. Shivaji was depicted by him as one who possessed many virtures. He respected women, children, Brahmins, mosques, saints and faqirs in contrast to 'Muslim' rulers who destroyed Hindu temples, enslaved the Hindus and perpetuated cruelities on them.[43] The motif of Hindu tolerance and Muslim fanaticism, coming directly from Dayanand, widened the communal divide. Moreover, this idea gave a false sense of moral superiority to Hindus.

Unlike Aurobindo Ghose, Lajpat Rai did not give any theological explanation of Indian History; nor was he, unlike Tilak, unenthusiastic of social reforms under the then existing circumstances. But many political leaders of the Punjab he was very much eager to protect what he considered to be the Hindu interests. On one occasion he said:

> As at present situated the absence of such an organisation (Hindu political or semi-political organisation) places the Hindu at distinct disadvantage, and takes away from them, the chances of a united action or of a united expression of opinion upon matters, which affect the unity, prosperity, the well-being and generally the interests of Hindus all over India... In my opinion it should be the business of such a Hindu congress or conference to support and take, as far as possible, such steps which might conduce to their unity and strength as a religious nationality, as for instance, the language question, the question of characters, the advisability of having common text books, the teaching of Sanskrit language and literature all over India, the taking of steps which might lead to the protection of Hindu orphans from the hands of proselytising agencies of other denominations and if necessary to record a protest against those confidential circulars of the Government, which aim at favouring of other communities to the loss of the Hindus.[44]

These observations of Lajpat Rai were of a defensive character because they arose from a fear that there was a discrimination against the Hindus by the government and their number were being reduced by conversion to other religions. But Lajpat Rai, far from confining to such a defensive attitudes, advocated the promotion of Hindu nationalism. For instance he said:

> In my humble opinion it is sufficient for the growth of nationality, if the different parts that claim the shelter of its ways have a sense of unity, which is sufficient to make them combine against a common enemy and a common danger. Run on a few basic principles in religion, on the community of a sacred language, and on the community of interests, the Hindus ought to foster the growth of a national sentiment which should be sufficiently strong to enable them to work for the common good in the different ways and according to the

lights vouchsafed to each.[45]

No doubt, these views were primarily directed against the foreign political domination over India, they also indirectly affected Hindu-Muslim relations. Lajpat Rai was not alone in expressing such views. Tilak and B.C.Pal also expressed similar views.

Lajpat Rai attended some coferences organised by the Punjab Provincial Hindu Sabha which came into existence in January 1907. In August 1909, the Punjab Hindu Sabha decided to hold a Hindu Provincial Conference at Lahore on October 21-22, 1909. The Sabha met with great success in its endeavours to organise the conference owing partly to the general feeling of opposition to the Congress and partly to present importance of the Hindu-Muslim question.[46] It was attended by prominent leaders such as Lajpat Rai, Ram Bhaj Dutt chaudhry, Lala Hans Raj, Lala Dwarka Das, B.Tek Chand, etc. Lajpat Rai delivered an important speech on the Hindu Muslim question. He said that it was putting the cart before the horse to expect that Hindus and Muslims would unite and make a common cause for bringing about a sense of unity and solidarity among the different sections of the Hindu community itself.[47] In December 1909 addressing the Punjab Hindu conference, he pointed out that the Congress had failed to bring Hindus and Muslims together. Now it is for the Hindus to work for the Indian unity because "political salvation of India must come out of the combination and union of all communities into one national goal".[48] A number of conferences were organised at Amritsar in 1911, at Delhi in 1912, at Ambala in 1913, at Ferozepur in 1914 and so on. At the Ambala Session of the Punjab Provincial Hindu Conference held on December 7-8, 1913, a resolution was passed to hold a general conference of the Hindus of India at Hardwar on the occasion of Kumbha Mela in 1914.[49] A Committee of the prominent Hindu leaders including Lajpat was appointed to make the arrangements. However, he could not participate for he left India as a delegate of the Indian National Congress to England in the end of 1914. In the cloudy days of the First World War, the All India Hindu Mahasabha Movement took its birth. Its first session was held on April 9-10, 1915 under the

Presidentship of Sit Mahendra Nandi, the Maharaja of kasim Bazar.

The aim of Hindu Mahasabha had been the protection and the strengthening of the Hindu Rashtra and the promotion of Hindu civilization, culture and ideals. It stood for the revival of the Hindu glory.[50]

From 1916 to 1922, the Hindu organisation lay low on account of the Congress-Muslim League Pact, the Home Rule Movement, the Rowlatt Satyagraha and the Khilafat movement. But in the aftermath of the non-cooperation movement, the All India Hindu Mahasabha and its provincial branches launched themselves with new vigour. In the Punjab, the Punjab Hindu Sabha gained the adherence of a wide spectrum of the Hindu community because of the policies of Fazl-i- Husain, and claimed to speak for and defend the interests of Punjabi Hindus. Its revival, therefore, must be explained chiefly in terms of the political struggle which characterised Punjab politics since 1922.[51]

III

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the years between 1918 and 1922 were the halcyon days of both Hindu-Muslim unity and intense nationalist struggle. Why did the Hindu-Muslim communalists become active when the anti-imperialist movement entered its passive phases? In the post 1922 period, it was the disillusionment, frustration and discontent born out of the sudden petering out of the dream of Swaraj within one year- people found themselves, in the words of a historian, "all dressed up and nowhere to go" - that created favourable conditions for the rise of communal bitterness.[52] The government, the proportied classes and the political reactionaries could at that stage succeed in giving a communal colour to the politics of the middle classes and in diverting the newly aroused political passions and the incipient and inherent struggles of the masses for the improvement of their lot into communal channels.

Secondly, the system of separate communal electroates, developed almost parallel to the growth of the national movement and the process of constitutional reforms, was an important instrument for the development of communal politics. Along with elected legislatures and municipal bodies, communal representation, weightage, reservation and, above all, communal electorates were introduced. According to the 1909 Act, only Muslim could vote in Muslim constituencies, while they could vote along with Hindus in the general seats. After the Act of 1919, Muslims could vote for Muslim candidates only and Hindus for Hindu candidates only. Three basic assumptions underlay the system. First, that the political, economic, social and cultural interests of Hindus and Muslims were separate so that they could not be represented by candidates belonging to the other religion. Secondly, in a system of general electorate, since people would only vote for their co-religionists, either Hindus would swamp all elections because of their majority and thus few Muslims would be elected or mostly those Muslims would be elected who would be under Hindu influence because of their obligation to the majority for having elected them. Thirdly the legislators would work only for their own 'community' and use their 'power' to dominate the other 'communities'.

The effect of separate electorates was hightened by the restricted nature of the frachise which was limited by property and educational qualifications. This meant that elections were mostly confined to the middle classes which were otherwise involved in communal politics because of their hunt for jobs and other economic opportunities. Separate electorates thus meant institutionalization of middle and upper class needs, rivalaries and politics along communal lines. It also meant partial transforming of the emerging anti-imperialist sentiments among the middle classes into communal rivalry among Hindus and Muslims for seats in legislatures and for government jobs. Consequently, separate electroates strengthened communalism not only among Muslims but also Hindus. The general constituencies often returned nationalists but also communalists. Even the nationalists had to respect many communal prejudices of their middle class voters and thus became susceptible to communal ideological influences. In any case their capacity to wholeheartedly fight Hindu communalism was undermined.[53]

Moreover, the system of reservations of seats and weightage in representation to minorities also generated communalism. To the minorities it appeared that communalism, as also the government, was protecting their interests, while the majority tended to feel deprived of its 'natural' right to be in a majority. The Hindu communalists could, therefore, turn the anger of the majority against the minorities. However, the system of separate electorates had a disastrous effect on the process of national integration and nation-in the making. It created a regular political mechanism for the spread of communalism. It helped to create a political milieu in which communal elements could flourish. It encouraged and reinforced the habit of looking upon Hindus and Muslims as separate political entities. Communal views could now spread through election propaganda into a widening circle of social groups which were otherwise free of the communal struggle for loaves and fishes of jobs and office. It made it difficult for the secular nationalist elements to carry out an ideological, political struggle against communalism. In general, it exasperated and perpetuated communal feeling and heightened communal consciousness.

Another factor of discontent between Hindus and Muslims in 1920s was frustration and fear. The economic and social insecurity bred among several sections of Indian society - the zamindars, peasants, middle classes and artisans - a feeling that was conducive to the growth of irrational ideologies. The people felt a vague sense of deprivation, economic misery, frustration, discontent and personal and social anger. They were filled with feelings of uncertainty and insecurity and of deepening anxiety about their present and future and sometimes their very existence.[54] Hindu-Muslim communal leaders created vague anxieties and fears against the followers of other religious and propagated the moral that members of a particular 'community' must organise and act as a unity. The Muslim communalists constantly played up the theme of Hindu-domination over Muslims and of the latter being suppressed, crushed and exterminated and their culture and religion undermined and overthrown by the overwhelming Hindu majority. Muslim press was also responsible for creating Hindu phobia. In 1926, the *Moselam Darpan* warned that without government help the 23 crores of Hindus would "completely wipe out the 7 crores of Muslims".[55] Similarly, the Hindu communalists tried to instil a sense of fear, the fear of suppression and domination by Muslims, among Hindus. The task was not easy since Hindus were a religious majority. It was sought to be performed by declaring that the danger arose because Hindus were a milder, weaker, unorganized and ununited people. Furthermore, the prospects of Indian Muslims being aided by Afghanistan, Iran and Arabia were seriously discussed. In 1921, the editor of the Lahore daily, *Pratap*, warned: "If the Hindus do not wake up now, they will be finished".[56] In his address to the Hindu Mahasabha in 1924, Dr. Kurtakoti, the Shankracharya, declared that if Hindus did not take up in right earnest the work of *Shuddhi* or conversion, "within ten decades, you shall find no Hindu on the surface of this earth".[57]

Petty questions such as cow-killing, music before a mosque, throwing of coloured water during the *Holi* festival and cutting down of a *peepal* tree became the occasions for communal tension because they got tied with the fears of the people, especially with the problems of petty bourgeois identity, ego and insecurity. Apart from these, Muslim communalist had another feeling of fear and hatred. In particular, they argued that the nationalist demand for self-government and democracy would bring into play the principle of majority rule which would inevitably lead to permanent Hindu domination and therefore, to a bleak future for Muslims in a free and united India since they could not expect a fair and equal treatment from the permanent Hindu majority. For years, the Muslim communalists, therefore, fought for all sorts of special safeguards and concessions.

The Hindu-Muslim unity forged under the leadership of Gandhi during non-cooperation days proved temporary. After the withdrawal of non-cooperation movement in 1922 and the abolition of the institution of Khilafat in 1924 the Hindu-Muslim relations took a turn for the worse. In 1924, India witnessed an orgy of serious communal riots in various parts. In March and April there were communal riots of a serious nature in Amritsar, Multan and other parts of Punjab. In May there were further riots between Hindus and Muslims in Amritsar and some disturbances in Sind. In June and July communal outbreaks occured in Moradabad, Meerut as well as Allahabad, and riots of serious and distressing character took place in Amritsar, Panipat, Jabalpur, Gonda, Agra, Rai Baraily and Kohat. Thus, the short lived Hindu-Muslim unity soon disappeared. Gandhi's mighty effort to bring about political union between the two communities against the British received a serious set-back.

As mentioned earlier Lajpat Rai since his involvement with Arya Samaj believed in the unity among the Hindus. He emphasised on this issue in various conferences organised by the Punjab Provincial Hindu Sabha. After the non-cooperation Movement and release from jail in 1923, he started to appear as a changed leader. In 1920s, he took active interest in the consolidation of Hindu community, its organisations and movements. His Hindu friends outside the province with whom he shared private views called him as a "person incharge of the Hindu embassy". Such activities gave birth to suspicion and antagonism among the Muslim community particularly in his home province where they were in dominant position.

Lajpat Rai was a prominent spokesman of Hindu Mahasabha in middle 1920s. With the rise of communal passion this body attained great strength and popularity with the Hindus. After 1923, it took up the enormous task of organizing the fragmented Hindu society into an organic whole. The object of Hindu Mahasabha, according to Rai was to crystallize, articulate and defend the exclusive interests of the Hindus because the Congress being the common organization of all communities could not perform this task. The Hindu Mahasabha, he said, did not aim to interfere in the just rights of other communities. Nor was it to divert the attention of the Hindus from their primary and foremost object of liberating their country from the bonds of political servility. He favoured to confine its work to safeguarding the interests of the Hindus and to carry out social reforms in the community.

He participated in the grand and special session of the Hindu Maha-Sabha held at Prayag in February 1924. In this year he said that Hindus must be saved "from the death which threatened them".[58] In 1920's, he presided over many Provincial Hindu conferences held in Bihar, Burma, Sind, Punjab, etc.

In his presidential address to the Hindu Mahasabha in April, 1925, at Calcutta, he expressed the apprehension that Hindus might get "obsessed by false ideas of 'Ahimsa', which might encourage others, i.e. Muslims, to interfere with our rights and to humiliate and destroy us".[59] In his opinion the Hindu Mahasabha had no special political functions except "to define the position of the community in relation to other communities. The Hindus as a community are opposed to communal representation as such in any shape or form".[60] The Lucknow Pact, to him, was a mistake. He did not consider that an understanding between the Hindus and the Mohammedans was impossible but, he said, "The Hindus will not submit to any coercion whatsoever in arriving at some settlement. No amount of disturbances will make them enter into any agreement which they do not consider fair and just. The Hindus do not desire any domination over the Mohammadan population. What they want is the safeguarding of their interest and that of India generally".[61] He appealed to all the different sections of the Hindu community to lay aside their differences and unite under the flag of the Hindu Mahasabha.[62] He recommended the programme of starting a relief fund for the benefit of riot-affected Hindus, promotion of physical training and gymnasium, proper celebration of Hindu festivals, and reconversion of the converts.[63] The session accepted the programme and decided to establish Hindu protection leagues to prevent exodus of the Hindus to other religions. Here Lajpat Rai also adopted liberal communal position when he simultaneously argued for Hindu unity and solidarity and Hindu-Muslim unity. Only when Hindus were as strong and united as Muslims would the latter agreed to join hands with them for political purposes.

The session of Hindu Mahasabha under Lajpat Rai's presidentship attracted much adverse comment in the

Muslim papers. Thereafter there were serious defections from the Swaraj Party, and the responsivists such as Kelkar and M.R.Jayakar started attending the Hindu Mahasabha meetings and sessions. On the other side, the Muslim League session at the close of the same year was marked by a highly provocative address of Sir Abdur Rahim. In his official report to Parliament, Rushbrook Williams dilated on the impact of the session. Rahim's address and the resolutions passed at the session indicated that no further constitutional progress was possible without most strident safeguards for the Muslims. The frankly communal character of the speech and the attacks on the Hindus caused excitement.[64] These intensified communal tension.

Again, addressing the Hindu Conference at Bombay on December 5, 1925 Lajpat Rai told his audience that communal solidarity had become essential for the security of their political future, because the Muslims "insisted on communal representation all along the political line and also on organizing their separate communal entity in India. This is bound to come about if other communities refuse to organise themselves. Their refusal or neglect to do so means acquiescence in a condition of things which must sooner or later end in their merging in or subordination to other community. Organisation means power, influence and prestige: Those who neglect to organize must give way to the organization. If the Hindu community does not wish to commit political Harakiri, they must move every nerve to be communally efficient and united. To divide itself into religious sections with separate political ambition, is the greatest folly of which a community can be guilty".[65] He also declared that the main object of the Sabha was to promote greater unity and solidarity among all sections of the Hindu community and to unite them more closely as parts of one organic while.[66] Some prominent Hindu leaders who were present in the conference fully endorsed his views. They were Malaviya, President of the 1923 Hindu Mahasabha, M.R.Jayakar, N.C.Kelkar, M.S.Aney, B.S.Moonje, etc. Even Tarakhnath Das, a well known Hindu nationalist leader adroad, showered praise for Lajpat Rai's work as a member of Hindu Mahasabha. In his strictly confidential letter dated January 11, 1926 from Geneva, Tarakhnath Das wrote to Lajpat Rai, "Allow me to extend my heartly tribute to you for the most valuable service you are rendering to India and the world by championing the cause of Hindu Mahasabha".[67] Referring to Lajpat Rai's presidential address before the Bombay Hindu Sabha he added, "I am fully convinced that the greatest work for the regeneration of the people of India is yet to be undertaken by the Hindu Mahasabha movement. It seems to me that you have the right conception of the whole situation and the method to be adopted when you have emphasised the need of reformation from within the Hindu society and not an attack from outside by Hindu reformers; forming some special society".[68] Thus, prominent Hindu leaders considered him the foremost leader of Hindu organisation. But the Muslim press reacted sharply against this session particularly its President's views.

Lajpat Rai, during the tenure of his presidentship, transferred the head office of the Hindu Mahasabha from Banares to Delhi. From 1923 onwards the main pre-occupation of the Hindu Mahasabha was to oppose the demands of the Muslim League and to get the Lucknow Pact revised which had denied the Hindus the advantages of a minority in Bengal and the Punjab. The Mahasabha leaders were also not in favour of the continuation of separate electorates for an indefinite period.

During the general elections for the Central Assembly 1926, the role of Hindu Mahasabha became a controversial issue. Lajpat Rai had formed his own Independent Congress Party with the collaboration of Madan Mohan Malaviya. His party included men like Haridayanath Kunzru, Munshi Ishwar Saran who did not belong to Hindu Mahasabha.[69] He opposed the idea of the Hindu Mahasabha running its own candidates for the legislatures. He declared, "I am in favour of organising the Hindu community, strengthening and solidifying it religiously, socially and economically, but I do not favour the idea of Hindu setting up a separate political existence of their own".[70] This angered many of his sympathisers in the Hindu Mahasabha particularly Bhai Parmanand and Madan

Mohan Malaviya. They wanted the Hindu Mahasabha to contest elections in its own name and capture seats in the legislatures. But, he remained firm and reiterated that elections should be conducted and contested only under the lables of political bodies. Ultimately the opinion of Lajpat Rai prevailed and the Hindu Mahasabha did not put its own candidates in the elections. About this controversy which took place in the 9th session of Hindu Mahasabha, Indra Prakash, General Secretary of Hindu Mahasabha writes, "Had the resolution of Bhai Parmanand been accepted, the fate of the country would have been different from what it is today, because in the 1926 elections, the majority of the Hindu legislatures would be owing allegiance to the Hindu Mahasabha, and no mischief could have been caused to Hindustan".[71] However, it was the victory of Lajpat Rai's mature and skilful statesmanship. For this stand, he got appreciation from British friend Josiah C.Wedgwood. He was hopeful that Rai "will stop the priests and fanatics and superstitution-mongers getting their nose into the trough. They would spoil any party and ruin any cause, respect, justice, fairplay..."[72] After this event, his differences deepened with some orthodox Hindu Mahasabites.

In 1920's, another example of Lajpat Rai's liberal communal nationalism can be given when he stated reasons of his resignation from Swaraj Party. We have also discussed this in chapter 5. Again in September 1926, in a major speech delivered at Lucknow to explain why he had resigned from the Swaraj Party, he laid down his creed of liberal communalism. He said that the policy of non-cooperation would not succeed because Muslims were not supporting it. And, then went on to say:

> The leaders of Muslim community claim certain rights for their community, the acceptance of which will reduce the Hindu community to a position of subordination, if not immediately, at least in the future... In the circumstances, the Muslims have allied themselves with the Government... There are some good men amongst the Hindus who think that the reconversion of the whole Muslim community and the establishment of an all-prevailing

> all-absorbing Hindu policy is not only desirable but feasible... To my mind that policy is impossible. Then there is the Swaraj Party... whose leader maintains that he is constitutionally unfit to think communally, which means that he can only think non-communally. There is a third party to which I have the honour to belong, and who think that nationalism is not inconsistent with justice to Hindu community and that unity cannot be purchased at the cost of Hindu rights... I do not want the Hindus to return such people to the councils as are advocates of the idea of Hindu Raj or are in favour of a counter-alliance with the Government. What I desire the Hindu electorates to do is to send genuine nationalists, stern patriots and firm Hindus who will not compromise in such a way or yield to such an extent as to endanger the position of the Hindu community.[73]

He ended his speech with the basic liberal communal sentiment which contemporary Muslim communalists were also expressing: "I want freedom for my country, but I must be sure that I get that freedom without losing my status as a Hindu. I do not want to change masters".[74] He repeatedly proclaimed the slogan: "No Swaraj without safeguarding the interests of the Hindus".[75]

To strengthen the Hindu community and to fortify its political position, the Hindu Mahasabha leaders started Shuddhi and Sangathan in early 1920's. Shuddhi aimed at the conversion of those who had left the Hindu fold, and Sangathan constituted an attempt to consolidate and strengthen the Hindu community. In 1923, B.S. moonje, its organiser, explained the aims of the movement quite clearly. Presiding over the third session of the Oudh Hindu Mahasabha at Ayodhya, he said, "just as England belongs to the English, France to the French, and Germany to the Germans, India belongs to the Hindus... If Hindus get organised, they can humble the English and their stooges, the Muslims... the Hindus henceforth create their own world which will prosper through Shuddhi and Sangathan".[76]

Lala Lajpat Rai expressed his full support to these two Hindu movements i.e. *Shuddhi* and *Sangathan*. Earlier he had written a chapter on "Shuddhi work" in his book entitled *Arya Samaj* published in 1915 in which he emphasised in the work of reclamation and reconversion.[77] He was fully aware of the deleterious effects of the *Shuddhi* movement on India Nationalism. He realised that the *Shuddi* movement was a product of Muslim sectarianism. Expressing his views in December 1924, he said that "It was the communal demands of the Muslim community... which created the atmosphere.. one can see no way of stopping the movement as long as non-Hindu agencies are free to carry on their proselytizing work... the only way to minimise its importance is to do away with communal representation".[78] In the same year he openly wrote that the principle of *Shuddhi* "has now been accepted by the Hindu Sabha, and I am free to confess the idea at the back of this decision is partly political, partly communal, and partly humanitarian".[79] As for *Sangathan*, he considered it as "a reaction of the Hindu-Muslim situation". The Khilafat movement similarly gave birth to the *Tanzim*. Lajpat Rai emphasised that both the *Sangathan* and the *Tanzim* would have been welcomed, had they united each sect in itself and then paved the way for these two main organisations to come together. But the development took different lines.[80] They could possibly serve only "to increase the already existing estrangement between the two communities. The Muslim movement is also intended to keep the Pan-Islamic movement going".[81] Again clarifying his stand on *Shuddhi* movement in March 1926, Lajpat Rai said that the activities of the Christian and Islamic missionaries and propagandists had led to the entering the field of active proselytism. He justified on legal and moral points of view.[82]

As a leader of various famine relief societies right from the end of the 19th century, Lajpat Rai was conscious of the missionary propaganda of the Ulema and the Christians who exploited, for purposes of conversion, the social inequalities practised by the Hindus. He, like other Hindu leaders, became vociferous in advocating acceptance of the untouchables within the Hindu fold on an equal footing with the other castes. He advised the Hindus not to ignore the repressed classes, for, "the cast bulk of them are Hindus; they worship Hindus gods, observe Hindu custom, and follow the Hindu law. A great many of them worship the cow and obey their Brahman priest".[83] Describing the crual treatment of the Depressed Classes, he said: "today the question is whether we Hindus are prepared to put aside our pride of caste and embrace in brotherly fold these poor brethern in whose veins courses the same blood as in ours, and build strength for ourselves, or are we going to let others take these into their own fold. Both Mohammedans and Christians are prepared to uplift them by receiving them into their faiths... Those Hindus who believe in Hinduism and whose hearts feel for Hindu race must, therefore, place this problem in the very forefront of any programme of Hindu reform; and spend their power and money in its solution".[84] This solution was purification (Shuddhi) of the untouchables. On another occasion he asked the Hindus to abandon the old game of throwing out people on very small pretence. Instead the Hindus should seek occasions to bring people back into Hindu fold without injuring anybody's scruples.[85]

Moreover, the communal approach of Lajpat Rai become more clear and strange when he advised the Hindu community on April 13, 1927, that "you must begin to take care of your interests as a community first and then as a nation and sometimes both simultaneously".[86] Giving stress on the need for Hindu Sangathan he described the Hindu culture more scientific and more spirited.[87] After three days he made an earnest plea to the members of 10th All India Hindu Mahasabha for Shuddhi and the removal of untouchability with a view to saving Hindu society from disintegration. Here he forcefully said that it was a mistake to interpret Swami Shradanand's death as an end of Sangathan and Shuddhi. Thousands of Swamis would rise from his ashes.[88] It was certainly a communal tone. The influence of Lajpat Rai on the Hindu leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha can be seen from the editorial of the Tribune dated April 19, 1927: "We are not surprised to learn that Lala lajpat Rai advised Dr.B.S.Moonje to change the wording of the Presidential speech which he had prepared for the tenth session of the All India Hindu Mahasabha which held its sitting at Patna on Friday and Saturday".[89] It appears he was forceful and active leader of the Hindu Mahasabha and its movements.

Lajpat Rai was even in favour to extend the activities of Shuddhi movement abroad where Hindus had embarced Christainty. For this, he suggested in April 1928, it was extremely useful from a Hindu point of views to send teachers and preachers in foreign countries.[90]

Records reveal that Muslims took Shuddhi and Sangathan seriously. As a counterblast they also started Tanzim and Tabligh. Sir Abdur Rahim, in his Presidential Address to the 17th Session of the All India Muslim League held at Aligarh in December 1925, referred that the professed object of the Shuddhi movement was to convert Muslims in millions to Hinduism and that of the Sangathan to train the Hindus for self-defence, while the Mahasabha was a general organisation which comprehends all Hindu activities. He said, "The Muslims regard these movements, which led by politicians like Lala Lajpat Rai and Swami Shardhanand, as the most serious challenge to their religion that they ever had to meet as a grave menace to their political status". "The result is that," he added, "the Muslims have started their Tanzim".[91] According to a Pakistani historian, "With the intensification of the propaganda for Shuddhi and Sangathan there was an alarming increase in Hindu-Muslim clashes which usually occured owing to the insistance of Hindus on playing music before mosques at the time of prayers and to their opposition to the Muslim's right to sacrifice cows on the occasion of Bakr Id".[92] Muslim felt that the purpose of the Hindu movements was to destroy Islam in the subcontinent.[93]

The propaganda and activity of Shuddhi and Sangathan enhanced the Hindu-phobia among the Muslim community. It also helped the Muslim League to consolidate its hold over the Muslim masses. Similarly, Lajpat Rai's involvement with Hindu Mahasabha, all provincial Hindu Sabha, Shuddhi and Sangathan, and his strong speeches in favour of his community amply demonstrate that he was the foremost leader of Hindu community in 1920's. M.R.Jayakar is right when he descried Lajpat Rai as an incharge of the Hindu embassy.[94] But it created fear, doubts, frustration and antagonism among the Muslims. It made the work of unity conferences difficult under the secular leadership of Gandhi.

IV

Lajpat Rai's liberal communal positions can also be noted when he reacted on Hindu-Muslim pacts and role played in various unity conferences in 1920s. The unity from the top was the strategy behind arranging the unity conferences by secular leaders.

In 1923 Deshabandhu Das had drawn up a Hindu-Muslim Pact for settlement of the communal question in Bengal. Lajpat Rai's relations with C.R.Das were strained on this issue. The pact had provided for:

1. Representation in the Legislative Council on the basis of population with separae electorate.

2. Representation to local bodies to be in proportion of 60 to 40 in every district - 60 to the community which was in majority and 40 to the minority.

3. Fifty-five per cent of the Government posts to be reserved for Muslims.

4. No music to be allowed before mosques.

5. No interference with cow killing for religious sacrifices but cows to be killed in such a manner as not to wound the religious feelings of the Hindus.[95]

This controversial pact offended Lajpat Rai and described it uncalled for. He raised eight major points against the Bengal Pact. Firstly, Swarajists alone were not competent to make such a pact even for their own province. Secondly, the provincial pacts must follow the national pact. Thirdly, provincial pacts generally create difficulties in the way of All-India

Pact. Fourthly, this pact should have dealt with all the communities composing the Indian nation and not for Hindus and Muslims only. Fifthly, it would make the realisation of Indian unity impossible. The division of posts on purely communal line was against sound nationalism. Sixthly, prohibition of music before the mosques at all time and on all occasions was an act of tyranny which even the Mohammedan kings had never done so. Seventhly, representations on local bodies of 60 per cent and 40 per cent was against the principles of representative government. Lastly, it was untimely and against the spirit of Indian National Congress.[96] He described the Hindu Muslim pact "a document which shows a regrettable lack of forethought and statesmanship. It is a direct negation of United India and of nationalism".[97] Thus, Lajpat Rai rejected the C.R.Das pact. On the contrary, Deshbandhu desired the Congress to put the seal of approval on it. The Coconada Congress, however, did not do so and the pact was rejected on the ground that it showed partiality for the Moslems and violated the principles of nationalism. Similarly, Surendranath Bannerjee in Bengal and C.Y.Chintamani also condemned the Bengal Pact with as much severity as Lajpat Rai.

Lala Lajpat Rai was associated with Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari in preparing a National Pact for improving Hindu-Muslim relations. The Congress at its special session held at Delhi in September 1923 appointed a committee to draw up an agreement for improving Hindu Muslim relations. Accordingly, a draft of the National Pact was prepared by Lajpat Rai and Ansari which was considered by the Subjects Committee of the Congress at Coconada in December 1923. The draft of the Pact was made public in January 1924. It provided for joint electorates with reservations of seats for different communities according to their numerical strength in the constituencies. It opposed discrimination on the basis of caste, religion and colour in public services and educational institutions, and urged Muslims to give up cow slaughter and the Hindus to refrain from playing music before the mosques.[98] Thus, the Pact indicated that the better minds among the Congress leaders had begun to realise the possibility of a communal rift and the necessity for making some sort, of settlement before the breach widened. But sufficiently speedy or sufficiently drastic action was not taken with the result that the differences did become more acute and grave.

Lajpat Rai was shocked at the communal riots in India particularly at Kohat in the North West Frontier Province on September 9-10, 1924. The tragedy triggered off as a result of an anti-Muslim poem published by Jiwan Das, Secretary, Senatan Dharma Sabha of Rawalpindi and imported by him into Kohat. The Hindus suffered enormously. 155 were killed and practically the whole Hindu population had to quit Kohat.[99] Gandhi held this poem responsible for the communal riots at Kohat,[100] and he undertook a fast of 21 days to create a climate for communal harmony. He advised the Hindu population of Kohat to trust the Muslims. Lajpat Rai did not agree with Gandhi's advice and judgement about the Kohat tragedy. In an article he categorically stated that the advice given by Gandhi to Kohat Hindus to repose complete trust in the Muslims of the town after riots was not sound and practical. He also disagreed with Gandhi's opinion that the "Kohat Hindus should have died defending their lives and temples and that they were guilty of cowardice in not doing so."[101] Further, Lajpat Rai believed that the "pamphlet (poem) has much less to do with the riots".[102] In his opinion the riots took place because of the protests of the Hindus against the conversions to Islam. In a confidential letter to M.R.Jayakar, Lajpat Rai wrote:

> One of the causes which led to Muslim anger against Hindus was the fact that whereas formerly Hindus did not protest against conversions to Islam, their attitude had changed during these last 3 to 4 years, even before the Shuddhi propaganda, and Hindus used to take such legitimate action as they could to get back the converted Hindus. This used to enrage the Muslims.[103]

Thus, Lajpat Rai's assessment of Kohat tragedy was entirely at variance with that of Gandhi. Gandhi's estimate was rather superficial, blaming one single poem for communal riots of such magnitude. His views were shared by many national leaders like Jayakar, Malaviya, V.S.Srinivasan, etc.[104]

Lajpat Rai, on the contrary, wanted to probe deeper to find out the more fundamental causes of communal disturbances. He, therefore, began to make a political and economic study of the riots. He contributed fourteen articles to the Tribune in November and December 1924 analysing the deeper causes of communal problem. He was convinced that social and religious differences between Hindus and Muslims were not the root cause of communal question. The policies of the British imperial rulers, introduction of separate electorates, economic backwardness of the Muslims were largely responsible for Hindu-Muslim problem; it was, in his view a political problem which should therefore, be solved on political basis.[105]

In fact, the Kohat tragedy shook the whole country. To investigate the incidents, the Congress appointed a Committee composed of Gandhi and Shaukat Ali. But both differed widely in fixing the responsibility of the respective communities involved.

As mentioned earlier Gandhi undertook fast of 21 days to create a climate for communal harmony by an act of penance for the sins committed by both the communities against each other. It commenced on September 18 in Delhi in the house of Muhammad Ali. His fast provided an opportunity for calling a unity conference of leading Indian leaders from differrent communities. About three hundred persons met in the Sangam theatre at Delhi from September 26 to October 2, 1924. Lajpat Rai also attended the conference. The members deliberated for a week and passed several resolutions calculated to settle Hindu-Muslim differences. As a result of their efforts, a Central National Panchayat or Board consisting of not more than fifteen persons was appointed to enquire into and settle communal differences. But initially only six persons were nominated representing different communities under the Chairmanship of Gandhi. Other members were Lajpat Rai, Hakim Ajmal Khan, G.K.Nariman, Dr.S.K.Datta and Master Sunder Singh of Lyallpur. The conference laid down certain fundamental rights relating to liberty of holding and expressing religious beliefs and folloing religious practice, sacredness of places of worship, cow-slaughter, and music before mosques with a statement of the limitations they must be subject to.[106] There was jubilation in nationalist circle. The conference brought home the leadership that the change of heart was the first and the foremost pre-requisite for any lasting settlement between the two communities.

About Gandhi's fast, Lajpat Rai said: "... For the first time he felt miserable at the thought that he, who had striven his best to obtain Hindu cooperation for the saving of the Mohammedan 'temple', Khilafat, had to see desecration of Hindu temples by tens, in most cases without any provocation, at the hands of Mohammedans..."[107] Wishing Gandhi all success in his resolve to solve the communal problem, Lajpat Rai suggested that Gandhi would succeed in his efforts only when he "devotes himself whole-heartedly to the understanding of the real causes that underlie the present situation, and scrupulously avoids proceeding on assumptions and presumptions engendered by affectionate relations with friends, and well meaning but ineffectual professions of devotion on their part. He must adopt a scientific attitude towards the question and proceed by scientific methods to find out the root cause of trouble and its possible solutions".[108] Lajpat Rai was stunned to find at the unity conference that some delegates were obsessed with "absolute rights". "Time after time", he remarked, "it was said that the Mohammedans had an inherent right to slaughter cows and that that could only be curtailed by their own voluntary sacrifice... I contend that there is no such thing as an absolute right vested in any individual or in any community forming part of a nation that all rights are relative..."[109] And he believed that in a country like India individual rights were to be exercised in such a way as not to clash with the just rights of others. What was needed was mutual understanding and mutual adjustment.

However, Gandhi broke his fast in the presence of Lajpat Rai on October 8. His momentous fast could produce nothing more than a surface agreement at the top between the leader of different 'communities'. The unity conference was not very successful. Its proceedings were marred by acrimonious debates over several issues. Further, the decisions of the conference could not be fully implemented on account of its composition. The delegates could neither claim to be the representatives of their respective communities nor were all the regions represented in proportion to their population. While a large contingent of Hindus belonging to the Congress, Hindu Sabha and the Arya Samaj from the Punjab attended the conference, very few Mohammedans of this province, inspite of being in majority, showed any interest in it. Similar was the attitude of Mohammedans of the N.W.F.P.

After the Kohat tragedy, Lajpat Rai privately persuaded Gandhi to visit Punjab for Hindu-Muslim unity and to meet the riots affected people. Gandhi visited Lahore, Amritsar and Rawalpindi from December 4 to 10, 1924. A number of leaders belonging to three major communities also arrived in Lahore to meet him. The most important among them were Lajpat Rai, Maulana Shaukat Ali, Dr. Ansari, Hakim Azmal Khan, Zafar Ali Khan, Dr. Kitchlew, Sardar Mangal Singh, etc. Gandhi was a guest of Lajpat Rai in Lahore. Mahadev Desai, the Personal Secretary of Gandhi, who accompanied him writes in his diary about a meeting thus: "In the private discussions held at Lalaji's residence, both Hindu and Muslim leaders had had their full say freely and without reserve".[110] On December 5, Gandhi went to Darbar Sahib (the famous Golden temple) along with Mangal Singh to meet the Akalis.[111] At Rawalpindi, he met Kohat refugees in the camps on December 9. He held the officers of N.W.F.P. responsible for not protecting the interest of the minorities in Kohat. He said, "that the real robbers and inceridiaries were the Frontier officers and not the frontier people".[112] His investigation of the Kohat affair sharpened his awareness that the causes of the riots were not essentially religious, for, now he did not believe that the publication of the scurrilous poem alone was responsible for raising the Muslims against the Hindus at Kohat. He was sorry for the Hindus who had given offence to the Muslim susceptibilities but did not consider the action taken by the Muslims in retaliation as in any way justified since the Hindus were ready to make amends for the offence caused to the Muslim susceptibilities. He deprecated the acts of the Khilafat volunteer for having neglected their duty to protect the Hindus. He frankly advised the people that "if you want Swaraj, you must make your hearts free and fearless. No man can annihilate another. The man himself is the real cause of his annihilation.[113] Gandhi's visit could not bring out very positive results. It is obvious from a private letters of Lajpat Rai to Purshotamdas Thakurdas written on December 13, 1924:

> The series of informal conferences between Hindu and Mussulman leaders of upper India, recently held at Lahore under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi, have made it clear that the Mussalman leaders of all shades of opinion, the so called non-cooperators, Khilafatists Muslim Leaguers, changers and non-changers are, almost all, of one mind as regards their political demands.[114]

Muslim leaders had two stands. Firstly, they emphasised that their muslim majority provinces must not be reduced to a minority or an equality with the other communities in the provincial legislature. Secondly they expressed their willingness to accept population as the basis of representation in the legislatures thoughout India provided that the same principle should also apply in the local bodies and public services and central legislature.[115] On the contrary the Hindu leaders opposed to the principle of communal representation and most strongly to its extension to the local bodies and to the public services. The Hindu leaders wanted that "the recent riots all over India, but most particularly the event of Kohat had produced an atmosphere of coercion and intimidation, and until that atmosphere was changed there could not be a proper settlement of these questions on the merits".[116] On this the muslim leaders replied that "the disputes over these questions alone were responsible for the riots and therefore, their settlement was necessary to bring about peace".[117] The population basis of communal representation was also not acceptable to the Sikhs. The Sikhs maintained that they were a community in themselves and had been accepted by the Government as such; but that even then they did not insist on communal representation if the Mussalmans also dropped it. They were prepared to take their chances in the general election. They were also prepared to accept representation on the basis of taxation or voting strength.[118]

It may be mentioned here that Lajpat Rai stoutly opposed the system of separate electorates. A large number of Muslim leaders had been demanding communal representation with separate electorates in legislatures, local bodies, universities and other official and semi-official bodies. The most outstanding among them was Fazil-i-Husain of Punjab who with a view to rescue his community from "the morass of intellectual stagnation, economic backwardness, political inferioirty" strongly advocated separate electorates and weightage. The Muslims, in his opinion, constituted "a palsied limb" of the Indian nation. They, therefore, deserved this "special treatment" for restoration to life and vigour.[119] As Minister of Education, he took a keen interest in promoting the cause of education amongst Muslims. He gave generous grants to the existing Muslim schools and colleges, and encouraged the establishment of new ones. In justification of his policy of giving financial aid to Muslim schools and colleges, Fazl-i-Husain argued that there was an unequal distribution of grants to the government-aided institutions.[120] In November 1924, he sanctioned a grant for setting up three new intermediate colleges at Lyallpur, Gujrat, and Campbellpur for the benefit of the large Muslim population in Western Punjab.[121] He also laid down that places in the Government College and the Medical College in Lahore should be distributed amongst Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs in the ratio of 40:40:20. He also made some significant changes in the working of the municipalities and local boards. He introduced communal electorates in eleven municipalities in addition to the thirty-eight already existing in January 1921, and adopted a new formula of representation according to which the elected seats were distributed among the communities in proportion to their population. This policy was obviously calculated to benefit the numerically preponderant Muslim community at the expense of the educationally and economically advanced Hindus. As a result of Fazl-i-Husain's bill Muslims improved their position. The same applied to the district boards of which Muslims controlled over 53 per cent in 1923.[122] The Punjabi Hindu elite viewed Fazl-i-Husain's policies as an assault on their social and economic position. Similarly, the growing communal squabbles were also reflected in the Legislative Council. The Hindu Councillors grievance against Fazl-i-Hussain was that he had not only unfairly and unjustly distributed patronage to his community,[123] but had also extended the principle of separate representation to public services, local bodies, and educational institutions. Moreover, Fazil-i-Husain's policy antagonished many liberal communal Hindus of Punjab.

Lajpat Rai regarded the system of separate electorates "theoratically and practically a negation of the united nationhood". It provided, he added "for a complete division of India, as it is into two sections - a Muslim India and a non-Muslim India".[124] He said that the Lucknow Pact(1916) was more or less a patch up affair between the Muslim League and the Indian National Congress.[125] His opposition to separate communal electorates and the Lucknow Pact which gave a seal of approval to them can be guaged from his strictly confidential letter to Purshottamdas Thakurdas: "I consider from the national point of view that the acceptance of the principle of communal representation in the Lucknow Pact in 1916, was a great blunder". "It is alleged", he added, "on one side and denied on the other that there was any understanding between the two contracting parties about the local bodies and the public services". He further added, "some Hindus present on that occasion allege that the latter were intentionally omitted from the application of that principle and the understanding was that no such claim would be made or entertained in the future. The Mussulmans allege that there was no discussion on these matters".[126] He also addressed similar letters to his Hindu friend M.R.Jayakar. He was convinced that separate electorates were wholly irreconcilable with Indian Nationalism. It is for this reason that he strived for the abolition of this pernicious system.

Lajpat Rai's position and role in the unity conference held at Amritsar on December 6, 1924 deserves careful analysis. Gandhi presided over this conference. It was attended by the leaders of three major communities. Many leaders belonging to the three communities demanded representation on the basis of separate electorates. Lajpat Rai asserted that once India accepted communal representation with separate electorates there was no chance of its being abolished without a civil war.[127] He favoured the adoption of some system, like proportional representation,[128] for ensuring adequate representation of the minorities in the elected bodies. He also appreciated the Muslim aspiration for a fair share in the public services. For this he wanted greater educational and economic opportunities for the Muslims which, he thought, alone could meet this demand without upsetting the Hindus. Further, he favoured recruitment to public services through a properly representative Public Service Commission in order to ensure to each community its due share in this sphere.[129] Zafar Ali Khan, a Muslim leader, refused to accept Lajpat Rai's suggestions and in the Conference he made some uncharitable remarks about him. At this Gandhi intervened and he asked the Muslims to trust Lajpat Rai as he was anxious for Hindu-Muslim unity, though he had his doubts about its attainment.[130] "Let me not conceal", said Gandhi, "my regard for Lalaji. I hold him to be brave, self-sacrificing, generous, truthful and god fearing. His patriotism is of the purest type. He has few equals in the quantity or the quality of service to the country. And if a man like him may be suspected of base motives, we would have to despair of Hindu-Muslim unity, as we would have to, if we suspected the Ali Brothers of base motives...".[131] Gandhi felt sorry for the remarks made by Zafar Ali Khan against Lajpat Rai. In the Conference, Gandhi said: "He always stayed with Lalaji whenever he went to Lahore and could say that he (Lalaji) was a strong advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity".[132]

Thus, the attempts of national leaders to reach any amicable solution in the Conference failed. Lajpat Rai's views to solve the problem on nationalistiic grounds could not satisfy Muslim communal leaders. They felt it would lead to Hindu domination.

Lajpat Rai had a solution to solve the vexed Hindu-Muslim problem. Earlier, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, an important leader of Muslim League, had suggested the formation of Hindu provinces and Muslim provinces under a National Federal Government. Lajpat Rai considered these proposals as sound and workable solution to the communal question. He suggested that the Punjab should be partitioned into two provinces; the Western Punjab with a large Muslim majority and the Eastern Punjab with a large Hindu-Sikh majority. Lajpat Rai's scheme may be summed up in his own words: "Under my scheme the Muslims will have four Muslim States: (1) The Pathan Province or the North-West Frontier, (2) Western Punjab, (3) Sindh, and (4) Eastern Bengal. If there are compact Muslim communities in any other part of India, sufficiently large to form a province, they should be similarly constituted".[133]

Lajpat Rai's suggestion is not an affirmation of the two nation theory. On the contrary it betrays Lala's strong political realism. He wanted to satisfy Muslim aspirations, a factor of parmamount importance, within the framework of Indian unity. This solution is a tribute to his political foresight, assessment of the political situation then existing in the country. Unfortunately the Congress did not pay any attention to his solution; in fact the Congress leaders underrated the strength of Muslim aspirations. If this solution had been accepted in 1924, perhaps the partition of the country might have been averted for the Muslim League which subsequently became a formidable political force was rather weak at that time.

After the failure of Amritsar Conference, the leaders made a secret attempt and on February 1, 1925, an informal talk took place at the Western Hotel, Delhi. Mahatma Gandhi, Jinnah, Lajpat Rai, Motilal Nehru, Ali Brothers, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Maulana Azad, Raja Narendra Nath and Jairam Das were present. The talk continued for about an hour and half, in which Jinnah reiterated his stand. The Hindu leaders' position also remained where it was: "Joint electorate and population as the basis everywhere".[134] Raja Narendranath said that he was not prepared to concede any majority to Muslims in the Punjab and that Sikhs would not consent to any reduction of their seats in the Punjab. The leaders did not reach at any concrete decision. However, it was decided to arrange another meeting on February 23, 1925.

After the failure of Amritsar Conference the national leaders, anxious to solve communal problem, convened an All India Parties Conference at Delhi on January 23, 1925. It was attended by over 70 persons including representatives of sixteen political and non-political organisations under the presidentship of Gandhi. Other promiment members were Motilal Nehru, Lajpat Rai, the Ali Brothers, S.K.Dutta, Ahmad Ali, Nawab Sir Sahed Zada Abdul Qaiyum, Muhammad Yakub, N.M.Joshi, N.C.Kelkar, Swami Shraddhanand, Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew M.A. Jinnah, A.K.Azad, Annie Besant, M.M.Malaviya, Srinivasa Iyengar, Sarojini Naidu, Sir Muhammad Shafi, M.R.Jayakar, V.J.Patel, B.C.Pal, Babu Rajendra Prasad. In addition to discussing the preservation of unity in the Congress rank, the Swaraj scheme, etc., the Conference concentrated on the discussion of communal problem.[135] The differences between the leaders were reflected in the proceedings of the Conference. Jinnah stated that the consensus of Muslim opinion was that there should be communal representation by separate electorates. He also wanted weightage for his co-religionists.[136] But he was not ready to give the same privilege to other communities. Lajpat Rai stood for "joint electorates, and population as the basis everywhere".[137] He refused to accept separate electorates.[138] He also refused to accept "51 per cent Muslim representation in Punjab and Bengal and the present percentage in other provinces as demanded by Jinnah".[139] In the discussion he stated that the Lucknow Pact was concluded to carry the Musalmans in the demand of self-Government. It was, in his opinion, a blunder. He described the communal representation "a negation of nationalism". "The growth of communalism meant," he added, "the death knell of nationalism".[140]

Lajpat Rai's opposition to communal representation stemmed from another consideration. He feared that by conceding Muslims' demand of communal representation the safety of India might be in jeopardy. He explained: "I am more and more convinced that communal representation will be a serious blunder for India's safety, since under its application, we shall be handing over the most valuable parts of India's border to

Mohammadan governments. We must guard against that".[141] Lajpat Rai was ready to consider any solution to the problem if offered in sincerity and keeping the larger interests of the country in view. He said: "If the question was approached from the national point of view and not from the communal he was willing to come to any agreement".[142] Motilal supported Lajpat Rai on his stand. However, no agreement was reached in the All India Parties Conference.

On March 20, 1927, Jinnah presided over a conference of more than 50 politicians held in Delhi.[143] The conference agreed to forego separate electorates if their four demands were endorsed in toto. The first of these demands was that Muslim representation in the Bengal and Punjab Legislative Councils would be in proportion to their population. The second was that Muslims would be allowed one third of the seats in the Central Legislature. And the last two demands were that Sind be separated from Bombay Presidency and constituted as an independent province,[144] and reforms be introduced in the North-west Frontier Province.[145] The reason, Mohammed Ali stated was that the presence of the Hindus in the Muslim-majority province would guarantee the safety of Muslims in the Hindu-majority provinces, and that the establishment of Sind as an independent province was necessary for the so called "balance of power between Hindus and Muslims in British India". Clearly, the strategy of Muslim politicians was to press for further Muslim-majority provinces being carved out of British India so as to form a northern bloc in which the Hindus would be, as it were, hostages for the good behaviour of their co-religionists in the centre and south. The issues of Sind and the North-West Frontier Province were used as paws in the chessboard of all India communal politics until 1935 when Sind was finally constituted into a separate province.

Anxious to maintain Hindu-Muslim unity, the Congress Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. accepted the Delhi proposals in order to pave the way for rapprochement with leading Muslim politicians.[146] Sardar Mangal Singh, General Secretary, Central Sikh League welcomed the Muslim proposal in agreeing to have joint electorates.

He wrote: "There is a concensus of opinion among the Sikhs that the principle of communal representation is harmful to the healthy growth of nationalism. They are, therefore, in favour of entire abolition of this vicious principle which is only possible if Mohammedan friends realising its harmful efects on our body politic see their way to give it up altogether".[147] But some local Hindu leaders were against Delhi's proposals. Lajpat Rai appreciated the Muslim decision on the joint electorates. As far as last demands were concerned he suggested Reformed Judiciary before the creation of Reformed Legislative Council in the North West Frontier Province. He was not against the separation of Sind from Bombay. However, he wanted that the interest of the minorities must be sufficiently safeguarded in the N.W.F.P. and Sindh.[148] Rai expressed doubts on the sincerity of the British India Government regarding last demands of the Muslims. He said that the real hinderance to the introduction of reforms in N.W.F.P. was the Government itself. For this the Government was trying to throw the whole blame on the Hindus. In this connection Rai replied to Thakur Datta, the leader of Frontier Hindus:

> They (the Government) really do not want to give any reforms to the N.W.Frontier Province. Yet in the eyes of the Mohamedans they make us responsible for that policy. Is it not then best to do something which will free us from that responsibility ?[149]

The Delhi proposals were considered by both the Hindu members of the Central Legislature and the 10th All India Hindu Mahasabha. The main aim of the meeting of the Hindu members of the Central Assembly held on March 23 was to consider what should be the basis of discussion on the subject of their representation in the legislatures of the country. The leaders of the Nationalist party like Madan Mohan Malaviya and Lajpat Rai were prominent spokesmen in the meeting. After long discussion the meeting accepted the principles thus: (a) Joint electorate for all legislatures throughout the country; (b) reservation of seats on a population basis in all legislatures throughout the country; (c) safeguards for protection of religious and quasi-religious rights to be provided for in the constitution; (d) question of redistribution of provinces on a linguistic and other essential basis to be left open for consideration.[150] Some leaders brought the Delhi proposals before the session of the Hindu Mahasabha held at Patna on April 15, 1927. Its subject committee included Malaviya, Lajpat Rai, Narendra, Jairamdas Daulatram, Dr. B.S.Moonje, etc. and they unanimously welcomed the Muslim proposals, while on the reservation of seats, they favoured uniformity all over India, either on the basis of population or on that of actual voting strength whichever might be feasible. It was, however, subject to the condition that this reservation was not to be permanent but should be scrapped definitely after a period to be agreed upon between different parties concerned.[151]

The attitudes of the Hindu leaders and resolutions passed in the tenth All India Hindu Mahasabha were not liked by the Muslim leaders of Punjab. Addressing the Punjab Provincial Muslim League on May 1, 1927, Sir Muhammad Shafi said that the attitude adopted by the Hindu Mahasabha and its leaders had caused him great pain and feelings of the deepest despondency for the future of the country. "Until the mentality of the Hindu Mahasabha", said he, "undergoes the necessary change and that body comes to realise that without Hindu-Muslim unity the attainment of Swaraj for our common motherland is an absolute impossibility". Speaking on behalf of his community, he said to Hindu leaders that the Muslim community would continue to ask for retention of separate communal electorate unless an effective guarantee of the protection of Muslim vital interests were forthcoming.[152]

However, the Madras session of the Congress held in December 1927, appreciated the preparedness of the Muslim leaders to accept joint electorates. It gave full assurance to the Muslims that "their legitimate interests should be secured... by the reservation of seats in joint electorates on the basis of population in every province and in the central legislature..." It also agreed to other Muslim proposals regarding Sind, N.W.F.P. and Baluchistan.[153]

The All India Muslim League also, at its session in Calcutta on December 30, 1927, accepted the Delhi proposals and decided to co-operate with the rest of the country in boycotting the Statutory Commission and in framing a Constitution for India on lines acceptable to all communities and all parties. This was the result of the lead given by Jinnah, Raja of Mahmudabad and others. But at this juncture the solidarity of the League was broken as one section refused to boycott the Simon Commission and also opposed Jinnah and others on account of their readiness to give up separate electorates. A rival session of the League was convened at Lahore on December 31 under Muhammad Shafi. An anti-boycott manifesto was issued whereby Muslims were warned that "a resort to the sterile policy of boycott... will bring nothing but shame and sorrow".[154] On the other hand, the Jinnah section contended that the proceedings of the League at Lahore were conducted in a most arbitrary and unconstitutional manner.[155]

The Delhi proposals were not acceptable to many local Hindu leaders of the provinces like Sind, N.W.F.P. the Punjab, etc. Through local Hindu Sabhas they started their agitation against the proposals. They also condemned Congress or accepting the Muslim demand for representation in the legislatures in proportion to their population, and for recognising the principle of partition along the 'permanent lines of religious cleavages'.[156]

The agitation against Delhi proposals subsided temporarily when the appointment of an all British Statutory Commission was made on November 8, 1927. But the controversy remained unresolved; they surfaced again when the All Parties conference was convened on February 18, 1928.

The All Parties Conferences which met in February 1928 was attended by over a hundered delegates including Malaviya, Motilal, Lajpat Rai, Ansari, Mohamed Ali, Sapru, Hasrat Mohani, Moonje, Jinnah, H.N. Kunzru, Jairamsad Daulatram, and the Raja of Mahmudabad.[157] Among them were representatives of the Congress, the Liberal Party, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League which had appointed a Committee consisting of the Raja of Mahmudabad, Jinnah, Hasrat Mohani, Abdullah Haroon and Ismail Khan to confer with other political organisations on the basis of the Delhi proposals.

The conference faced serious difficulties over the question of Sind. Hindu leaders, Jairamdas Daulatram, Moonje and Lajpat Rai made spirited speeches against its separation and rejected the Congress resolution relating to the creation of an independent Sind province.[158] They demanded that the issue of Sind should be reviewed again but Muslim leaders refused to agree. The Mahasabha delegates also objected reservation of seats for Muslim majorities in the Punjab and Bengal. On this point they were supported by the Sikh delegate Sardar Mangal Singh, as well as Motilal, and Jawaharlal Nehru, and other Hindu Congressmen. The Muslim delegates did not like the stand of Congress and Hindu Mahasabha leaders. So, they decided to boycott the All-parties Conference.[159] They key to the success of the All Parties Conference was in the hands of the Hindu Mahasabha. This organisation had made it difficult for the conference to hammer out an agreed solution by adopting a rigid attitude on the question of reservation of seats in a province for the majority community. The rejection of the Delhi proposals by the Hindu Mahasabha in April 1928 was the last straw. It antagonised Jinnah.

Feroz Chand, a close associate of Rai, writes that Lajpat Rai had generally not much difficulty in working with M.A.Jinnah. They had often worked together in the pre-non-co-operation days and though Jinnah left the Congress when Gandhi came into power, they once again worked with each other when Lalaji went to the Legislative Assembly. They were often seen discussing things not on the Assembly agenda but the broader aspects of the Hindu-Muslim relationship. They did not always see eye to eye and sometimes differed sharply, and they publicly criticised each other with zest and vigour, but it was always possible to know where the differences lay and to what extent they could work together, the boycott of the Simon Commission being an instance in point. During the Assembly Session, Jinnah would frequently walk into Lalaji's room without an appointment and unannounced. Sometimes he would do so several times in the course of the same day. Lalaji visited him likewise and very often they both would rise from a talk and go together to Malaviya to continue the discussion. There were no formalities, and whether or not the talks resulted in agreement there never arose a question as to who should seek whom. Jinnah had no Muslim League Party in the Central Assembly and was the leader of a small group of Independents. Lalaji and Jinnah may not have found a satisfactory formula for a communal settlement, all the same in most Assembly matters, they would wholeheartedly co-operate with each other.[160]

From Jinnah's point of view Lajpat Rai was 'a very astute politician and a staunch Hindu Mahasabhite'. He opinioned, "you cannot get away from being a Hindu if you are Hindu". He thought the word 'Nationalist' had become the play of Congress in politics. A private letter of Lajpat Rai to C.R.Das written in December 1922, which later published by Indra Prakash, Secretary of Hindu Mahasabha, raised doubts in the minds of Jinnah and Muslims about his sincerity to solve Hindu-Muslim problem. In his letter Lajpat Rai said:

> There is one point more which has been troubling me very much of late and one which I want you to think (about) carefully, and that is the question of Hindu-Muslim unity. I have devoted most of my time during the last six months to the study of Muslim history and Muslim law, and I am inclined to think it is neither possible nor practicable. Assuming and admitting the sincerity of Mohammedan leaders in the non-cooperation movement, I think their religion provides an effective bar to anything of the kind.
>
> You remember in conversation I reported to you in Calcutta which I had with Hakim Ajmal Khan and Dr. Kitchlew. There is no finer Mohammedan in Hindustan than Hakim Ajmal Khan, but can any muslim leader override the Quran? I can only hope that my reading of Islamic-law is incorrect. And nothing would relieve me more than to be convinced that it is so. But if it is right, then

> it comes to this, that although we can write against the British, we cannot do so to rule Hindustan on democratic lines.
>
> What is then the remedy? I am not afraid of the severe crises of Musalmans. But I think the seven crores in Hindustan plus the armed hosts of Afghanistan, Central Asia, Arabia, Mesopotamia and Turkey will be irresistible. "I do honestly and sincerely believe in the necessity or desirability of Hindu-Muslim unity. I am also fully prepared to trust the Muslim leaders. But what about the injunctions of the Quran and the Hadis? The leaders cannot override them. Are we then doomed? I hope that your learned mind and wise head will find way out of the difficulty.

Jinnah took above mentioned letter of Lajpat Rai seriously particularly his doubtful views on "Islamic law and inability to rule" the country on democratic lines. Later on he presented this letter to the twenty-seventh session of the All India Muslim League at Lahore in 1940. Here Jinnah commented that the Congress's attempts is to keep us in the minority and under the majority rule.[161]

Lajpat Rai actively participated in the fourth sessions of the All-Parties Conference held in Lucknow from August 23 to 31, 1928. More than 18 organisations participated. It was announced here that Muslim representatives from the Punjab had accepted joint electorates without reservation of seats for majorities. This was largely the result of the efforts made by a group of nationalists in the Punjab belonging to both the communities who had formed provincial committees. This Punjab agreement was signed by Lala Lajpat Rai, Dr. S.D.Kirchlew, Kharak Singh, Zafar Ali Khan, Abdur Rahman Ghazi, Mohammad Alam. Afzal Haq, Abdul Qadir, M.Daud Ghazi, Gokul Chand Narang, Sheikh Sirajud-Din Piracha, satyapal, Mangal Singh.

The conference approved and adopted the Punjab agreement which read as follows:

The Punjab Muslims directly with the introduction of the scheme recommended by the Nehru Committee

> report accept its recommendations on the communal representation including joint electorates without reservation of seats for any community in the Punjab provided that franchise is based on adult suffrage.[162]

Once the Lucknow Conference had given its assent to the Punjab agreement despite the persistent demand of the Muslims for reservation of seats, a campaign was started against those Muslims who had stood firmly by the Madras resolution. Endeavours were made to brush aside their opposition by proclaiming that the Report had gained the overwhelming support of the Muslims. Considerable efforts were made by Motilal Nehru and Lajpat Rai jointly as discussed in previous chapter to counteract the propaganda against the report.

In September-October, 1928, Lajpat Rai was involved in mobilising public opinion in favour of Nehru Committee Report which had recommended abolition of separate electorates. In Punjab many local leaders belonging to three major communities were demanding separate electorates in the legislative bodies. To dissuade them from this path Lajpat Rai convened a political conference at Lyallpur. He impressed upon them the political advantages of joint electorates and urged them to accept the Report. Here Ansari also supported Lajpat Rai's views. Some communal leaders attempted to disgrace him. Bhai Parmanand unable to see eye to eye with Lajpat Rai's views resigned from the Working Committee of All India Hindu Mahasabha.[163] It was largely on account of Lajpat Rai's firm faith in the Report, persuasive skill and his political ascendency that a resolution in support of Nehru Report was carried in the Lyallpur Conference.

The gravity of the situation soon dawned upon the Congress leadership when Jinnah expressed his indignation over the Nehru Report. Great hopes had been pinned on him and Mohammad Ali who was away since May 1928 and had given their wholehearted support to Motilal Nehru in the endeavours for Hindu-Muslim unity. It is pertinent to note here that before Jinnah was to leave for Europe, Ansari had expressed his apprehension to Motilal as to what would happen to the Report if both of them also went against it.[164] His apprehensions proved to be true when Jinnah, after getting the proceedings of the Lucknow Conference, gave a curt reply to Jawaharlal Nehru that though he had not gone through the Report fully, since the publication of that Report "much water had run down the Hooghly".[165] Interviewed by a press reporter on his arrival at Bombay about the Nehru Report, Jinnah said, "I have not had enough time thoroughly to digest the Nehru Committee Report because I did not get a copy of it until I reached Aden. Besides, I have not been able to get any authoritative report of the decisions of the Lucknow Conference which I understand has modified certain proposals contained in the Nehru Report with regard to Hindu-Muslim question. My position as President of the All-India Muslim League does not permit me to anticipate the decisions of the League... The Congress as usual and the League will be meeting in December next and I am hopeful that we shall yet find a solution of this critical question. I would, in the meanwhile, appeal to all those who do not agree with the Lucknow proposals not a rebel but to keep calm and organise themselves with a view to pressing their point of view. I would particularly appeal to Muslims not to be alarmed. I see no reason for consternation and stampede. Muslims should organise themselves, stand united and should press every reasonable point for the protection of their community".[166] Jinnah's statement is a masterpiece of political shrewdness. While profuse in words appealing for patience it was more designed to excite passions and create consternation than to focus Muslim opinion into channels of reasonable thought. It served as an encouuragement to all those Muslims and other men who had fallen foul of the Nehru Committee and its proposals.

In fact Motilal was so keen on enlisting Jinnah's support that he expressed his readiness to go to Bombay to receive him. Instructions were given to Purshottamdas Thakurdas who was staying in Bombay to "rope in" Jinnah as soon as he returned to impress upon him the effectiveness of the decision arrived at Lucknow.[167]

On the other hand, Lajpat Rai did not consider Jinnah as acknowledged leader of the Muslim community.

As an enthusiastic supporter he was not ready to negotiate as far as Nehru Report's decision on communal representation was concerned. He wrote to Motilal, "I will beg of you not to place much faith in Jinnah's party. Jinnah has really no followings".[168] Assuring him he added "I think you have more Muslims with you than Jinnah has with himself". He urged Motilal not to make any compromise with Jinnah about communal representation and warned him that "I may frankly tell you that I won't accept any change". Expressing his fear he further added, "With what difficulty I have managed the Hindu 'Sabhaites'. They will revolt if any changes are made and that may mean the wrecking of the scheme".[169] Lajpat Rai's views towards Jinnah's position amongst Muslim were right. He was not, at least in 1928, the undisputed leader of the Muslim community. The major section of the Muslim League led by Sir Shafi and Aga khan did not endorse the proposals made by Jinnah. The final solution of the communal problem did not lie in the liberation of individuals like Jinnah and Azad, but in the liberal attitude of the entire Muslim leadership. In spearheading the movement for separation, Jinnah only reflected the political aspiration of the Muslim elite, who had taken recourse to communalism to gain political ends even before his appearance on the Indian political scene. Furthermore, it was only after committing himself totally to the Muslim League philosophy that Jinnah could emerge as the unquestioned leader of the Muslim community. Otherwise, the Muslim of the Punjab and Bengal were not at all anxious to follow his lead. They would have rather accepted an Aga Khan or Shafi than Jinnah who was ready to barter away their interest to placate the "obstinate Hindus". The amendments made by Jinnah were not as innocent as is sometimes believed. What he suggested was nothing short of a political segregation of the two communities on a permanent basis. Any party striving for national unity would have tried to resist committing this kind of political Hara Kiri. The Congress, later on, refusing to amend the Nehru Report were also able to discern the true motivating force behind the 'Muslim Proposals'. The Muslims being in a minority in India as a whole "fear that majority may harass them, and to meet this difficulty they have made a novel suggestion - that they should at least dominate in some parts of India... The Hindus, on the other hand, although in great majority all over India, are in a minority in Bengal and the Punjab and Sind, Balunchistan and the North-West Frontier Province. Inspite of their all-India majority they are afraid of the Muslims in those Provinces. We cannot have one community domineering over another. We may not be able to prevent this entirely but the object we should aim at is not to give domination to one over another".[170]

The private records reveal that Motilal was in favour of the Muslims getting one third representation in the Central Legislature as he felt it would hardly make any difference to Hindu majority. He had even brought Lajpat Rai round to his point of view. But the sudden death of Lajpat Rai before the All Parties Convention in Calcutta was a great blow to the cause of the Hindu-Muslim unity as his colleagues in the Hindu Mahasabha had no knowledge of his understanding with Motilal. The later had started his negotiation with Lajpat Rai before the convention and though Lajpat Rai had been influenced by Motilal's arguments, he did not think it expedient to give in at that stage when the Muslims were insisting on other concessions also. It was decided by both of them that Hindu opposition to the Muslim demands might continue and even "stiffen upto the time the convention was held". The object in view was to "reduce the Muslim demands to an irreducible minimum".[171] In accordance with the understanding arrived at between the two, Lajpat Rai, while presiding over the Etawah Session of the Hindu Mahasabha (October 27, 1928) put up a strong opposition to every part of the Muslim demands. Later at the Calcutta Convention, the Hindu Mahasabha leaders made full use of his Etawah speech.[172]

No doubt Lajpat Rai was the undisputed national leader of the Hindu community, but he continued to speak for Hindu-Muslim unity and he was quite optimistic about it. Before arrival of the Simon Commission, he wrote, "I do not consider that an understanding between Hindus and Mohammadans is impossible.[173] In the Presidential address at Etawah Hindu Conference less than three weeks before his death, he made a passionate plea for a Hindu-Muslim settlement along the lines laid down in the Nehru Report. However, he did not live to see the tragic consequences of the communal problem.

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CONCLUSION

Lajpat Rai emerged on the political horizon of India at a time when the Indian National Congress was in formative stage. Congress methods and policies were based on prayers, petitions, resolutions and deputations to the Government. But within three years of its existence it had begun to lose official sympathy on account of its progressive demands. The British authorities, alarmed by the growing strength of its demands and aspirations, began to encourage reactionary forces against the national organisation. In the closing decade of the nineteenth century there was an increasing emphasis in the Congress for the adoption of more vigorous and self-reliant methods; extremism in Indian politics can be discerned about this period resulting, in course of time, in the birth of two wings of the Congress. Lajpat Rai was in full sympathy with the new spirit though he differed with the Extremists on certain issues. He was keen to take the message of the Congress to the larger section of the society and instil confidence among the people. Further, by his independent policies, conciliatory endeavours and transparent honesty of purpose, he attempted to consolidate the Congress and save it from inner split.

Lajpat Rai was one of the foremost leaders of the Congress; he played a very significant part in the history of this national organisation. To activize and strengthen the national movement under the Congress he adopted the policy of vigorous and persuassive speeches in its annual sessions. When he found the Congress wanting in energy and activity he kept himself aloof from its annual meetings. By constructive criticism, public and private writings, lecture tours and close intimacy with the national leaders he continued to work for national regeneration. Through these he focused the attention of Indian elite towards the need for self-reliance and self-help, constitution for the Congress and self-Government to create political consciousness for the advancement of national movement. His eloquency and ideas which impressed the national leaders led to his election as a Congress delegate (1905) to England to educate British public opinion on the Indian situation and to win the support of Labour, Democratic and Socialist parties. Here he made efforts to explain the Indian situation to the British electorate. He also paid a short visit to the United States of America to draw their attention towards the economic and political status of Indians in that country. The visit was highly significant. Lala Lajpat Rai was now convinced that the national movement in India could make rapid strides if political consciousness permeated among the masses too.

On his return Lajpat Rai vigorously extended full support and encouragement to the Boycott and Swadeshi programme of the Congress. He organised a number of meetings in the province against the partition of Bengal.

Congress was the Symbol of national unity and main vehicle of the national growth. At a time when this unity was seriously threatened, Lajpat Rai made great efforts to patch up ideological differences among the Moderates and the Extremists in the Congress. In this he was successful at the provincial level but not at the national level. His participation in the convention at Allahabad (April 1903) was the fulfilment of three objects - constitution for the Congress, support to India's aim of self-government and to bridge the gulf between the two sections of the Congress. He succeeded in his two former objects.

His visits to Britain on two occasions between 1908 and 1910 were due to his strict surveilliance in India and deadlock in Indian politics on account of split in the Congress. There he furthered the cause of the national movements in many ways. He severely criticised the despotic and unjust policy of the Government of India. he made relentless efforts to win the British sympathy for Indian demands and aspirations.

His intense patriotic feelings, forceful oration and constructive work again influenced the national leaders to send him (1914) as an official Congress delegate to England to promote the cause of Indian nationalism. This, ironically, resulted in his five years' exile.

Lajpat Rai's technique of national work abroad was not only different from other Indians but also more effective in furthering the cause of India's independence. Through his mighty pen, formation of associations and propaganda organisations he set a novel example in educating the foreign people about Indian situation. By meeting various political leaders and other influential persons in Britain, America, and Japan, he endeavoured to make India's problem an international issue. He strove to win their sympathy and moral support for India's struggle against foreign domination. For example, he met the Japanese Prime Minister and addressed American Senate Committee. His aloofness from the revolutionaries abroad was due to several reasons - their plans being impracticable; his concern against jeopardising Indian interest at the conclusion of the War; unpreparedness of Indians for armed revolution; and his keenness to return to his country as early as possible.

On his return to India Lajpat Rai actively involved himself in the nationalist movement. Gandhi launched the Non-cooperation Movement on account of the harsh and repressive policy of the Government after the War. Lajpat Rai threw himself heart and soul in the Movement. He presided over the historic special session of the Indian National Congress at Calcutta. We have seen how Lajpat Rai had some objections to Gandhi's Non-cooperation resolution which he attempted to amend at Nagpur (December 1920). Under his dynamic leadership the Non-cooperation Movement acquired great following and strength in Punjab. He directed the Movement in the rural and urban areas of the Punjab, visited various provinces in this connection and impressed upon the Congress leaders to accelerate the struggle. As a consequence he was imprisoned for one and a half year.

On his release from prison, he supported, as this study shows, the newly emerged Swaraj Party to fight for the national struggle from within the Legislatures and to maintain unity among the national leaders. But he gradually drifted from the Swaraj Party's harmful "walkout" policy and formed the Independent Congress Party in order to support the various measures on the basis of national interest and merits. This step invited the opposition of many leaders. Despite relentless efforts of his opponents he was elected to the Legislative Assembly on account of his popularity and selfless work. His full support to the Nehru Committee Report and the passing of the boycott resolution against the Simon Commission reflects his statemanship and nationalistic vision for the political advancement of India.

In Indian politics Lajpat Rai's position was unique. He held independent opinions on almost all important questions. For this he was never criticised in Congress circles for the leaders recognised his patriotic fervour and honesty of purpose. Even in the last stage of his life he continued to have independent opinions. In projecting the limited goal of Swaraj or Dominion Status for India and constitution for the Congress his thinking was more in line with the Moderates rather than with the Extremists. Of course he had innermost and ultimate desire to secure complete independence for India. In his advocacy of Swadeshi, boycott, national education and passive resistance for the realisation of Swaraj, Lajpat Rai could be said to have had greater resemblance with the Extremists. Like them he endeavoured to make the Congress broad-based; he wanted to infuse more manliness, boldness and vigour into Congress activities. Like Tilak he wanted to carry the Congress message to the common people of India. It was with this aim that in 1905 he urged Gokhale to have a "mass meeting" of about one lakh of people at Benaras coinciding the Congress session. All his life he emphasised the dire necessity of self-reliance.

Lala Lajpat Rai had so much in common with the Extremists in terms of political ideology and methods of work. Then why did he not join their camp openly and publicily? Lajpat Rai realising the crucial and difficult nature of the Indians' struggle against British domination did not want any division or schism in the national ranks. In the fight against Imperialism he was keen to offer united resistance. Division or disunity in the national camp, he knew, would only weaken the struggle. Hence his persistent efforts to bring about conciliation between the two warring wings of the Congress. His role as a "mediator" or a "reconciler" was largely actuated on account of this desire.

Incidentally, Lajpat Rai's permanent surveillance especially after his deportation by the Criminal Intelligence Department was not the result of his connection with the Extremists. Perhaps it was general policy of the Government to watch the activities of all national leaders of India. As we have found that he was closely watched in India and abroad only on the basis of suspicion. Or perhaps it was to demoralize Lajpat Rai. But being a practical man and frank by character and temperament this policy never effected his moral, patriotic and national activities.

The Punjab politics received an impetus and attained new dimensions since his involvement with the Indian National Congress particularly after his first visit to Britain and America as a Congress delegate. To create political consciousness in his province he directed the local bodies, invited Congress elite in the Punjab. His work also impressed the Executive of the Congress. His strong leadership during critical times like the Non-cooperation Movement, the legislative elections in 1926, the publicity in favour of Nehru Committee Report and the boycott of Simon Commission unfolded political mentality of the people and his popularity among them. He was foremost leader of his province who stimulated its politiics and brought the province on national platform.

As discussed in Chapter 7 Lajpat Rai was a liberal communal nationalist. No doubt he strongly believed in liberal, democratic, humanist and nationalist values but was also a believer and practioner of communal politics. His confidential private correspondence with the Hindu leaders - M.R. Jayakar, M.M. Malaviya, Purshottamdas Thakurdas, B.S. Moonje, Tarakhnathdas, Narendranath, Jairamdas Daulatram etc., speeches in various provincial and national Hindu Conferences, dual role in unity conferences in 1920s, strong associations with Hindu movement - shuddhi and Sangathan, work as a President of the Hindu Mahasabha amply demonstrate his communal approach. To Hindus, for example, he said, "You must begin to take care of your interests as a community first and then as a nation and sometimes both simultaneously." Expressing his views at another occasion he said, "No Swaraj without safeguarding the interest of the Hindus". His communal outlook become more obvious when he made it clear that "I want freedom of my country, but I must be sure that I get that freedom without losing my status as a Hindu. I do not want to change my master". His views and endeavours on reclamation and reconversion antagonised the Muslim leaders. The Government records and Lajpat Rai's private letters reveal that in famine relief work his missionaries adopted both social and religious aims. However, he and his group did not make serious attempts to accomodate the Muslim demands when communal politics was taking rapid strides. He had no faith in Jinnah and his Delhi's proposals. After 1922 he appeared as a changed leader. National leaders belonging to Hindu community rightly started calling him "as the person incharge of the Hindu embassy".

By his unique eloquence, practical and untiring personality, strenuous work and intense national patriotism he added a brilliant chapter in the advancement of Indian nationalism.

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Joginder Singh Dhanki obtained his Ph.D. degree from Panjab University in 1978. He is working as Reader in the Department of History, Panjab University, Chandigarh. He has edited Lala Lajpat Rai's *The Story of My Life : An Unknown Fragment* (New Delhi, 1978), *Buried Alive : Autobiography, Speeches and Writings of an Indian Revolutionary Sardar Ajit Singh* (New Delhi, 1984) and a dozen research papers in different learned journals.

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The unwanted and unwelcome Simon Commission visited India. During its boycott and resultant repression, Lala Lajpat Rai, leader of Punjab succumbed to injuries of a baton charge.

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